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INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT: A
GLOCAL PERSPECTIVE

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**INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND CHANGE MANAGEMENT:
A GLOCAL PERSPECTIVE**

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20 January 2025

DECLARATION

This is to certify that this work is entirely my own and not of any other person, unless explicitly acknowledged (including citation of published and unpublished sources). The work has not previously been submitted in any form to the Durban University of Technology or to any other institution for assessment or for any other purpose.

—
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ABSTRACT

Communication is the heartbeat of any organisation and forms a fundamental part of managing emergent change in dynamic organisations. With communication models still largely being influenced and guided by post-colonial, western and eastern influences, a *glocal* approach to the communication process is better positioned as an appropriate solution for a diverse workforce. Added to this is the impact external changes have on an organisation, such as globalization, technological changes, social and economic changes. Organizations now more than ever have been forced to either adapt or die. Although communication is viewed as important, internal organisational communication is often overlooked by management as an important tool in managing emergent change in diverse workforces. Cultural and organisational capacities, as dynamic variables are instrumental in influencing and informing the process and thus efficiency of internal organisational communication.

To explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes, the study used a quantitative research method to survey a selected automotive group in KwaZulu-Natal. It explored the communication processes and practices of various hierarchical levels of the organisation under study and used two different sampling strategies; namely, criterion for management and maximum variation sampling for staff in non-management positions. A multivariant statistical method was used to analyze the data.

The findings from the study revealed that current models of internal organisational communication are limited in terms of their appropriateness from a *glocal* perspective. Furthermore, the findings confirmed the appropriateness of the Chaos Theory as a framework for using internal organisational communication as a tool for managing emergent change within a diverse workforce. Based on the presented gaps in literature and findings from the study, the study presented the original contribution to the body of

knowledge: *A Glocal Process for Managing Emergent Change with Internal Organisational Communication*;

Keywords: emergent change management; internal organisational communication; Chaos Theory; *glocal* process for managing emergent change

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Mom – you epitomise the word “consistent” – your consistent love, support, and prayers is what has helped me cross the finish line. Your unwavering belief in me, your faith, and the tough-love, meant quitting was never an option. I honour you – you have led by example of what it truly means to be a strong, purpose driven woman .

The ancient African proverb explains how it takes a village to raise a child. It equally takes a village to support someone doing a PhD. This page acknowledges all the people that supported me throughout this journey. Just like a “wall of honour”, I acknowledge and honour you.

Prof Rawjee

Nisha

Sam

Taila

Mac

Dr Zogli

Dr Okeke-Uzodike

Prof Dlamini

Elaine

Dr Cumming

Prof Netswera

Darling

DEDICATION

Dad, you would have been so proud!

As a respected Officer in the South African Navy, you always taught me that “a smooth sea never made a skilled sailor.”

Amidst storms and white squalls, I sailed, at times unsure if I would ever see land again. Yet, those rough seas forged me.

I am now a skilled Captain commanding my own vessel. With a light wind astern and the seven seas in front of me, I am ready to set sail again.

Pastor Leslie James De Kock

1944 - 2015

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

DIPIA	Data Protection Impact Assessment
POPI Act	Protection of Personal Information Act
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
MRT	Media Richness Theory
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure

Never has the notion of chaos been so desirable.

Amidst chaos we can renew.

Within chaos we can evolve.

We can be perfectly, imperfect.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Communication is the lifeblood of any successful organisation and forms a fundamental part of managing change - especially in modern, dynamic organisations. Organisations as systems heavily rely on communication as an essential tool in maintaining interdependency and therefore, the framework to which an organisation can efficiently function. This study aims to assess the efficiency of internal communication in managing emerging changes within an organisation. The study intends to apply global change management processes within a South African context, offering a *glocal* perspective. In addition, the study intends to view change management through a Chaos Theory lens. Chapter 1 will present the background of the study within a South African context. Subsequently, the chapter will present the study's research problems, as well as aims and objectives. This is followed by a review of the literature and presenting the research methodology for the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Change is the only constant and for organisations to survive, change needs to be viewed as a fundamental resource and not an avoidable threat. Organisations are in a constant state of change with changes varying from large-scale changes such as mergers and retrenchments, to smaller day-to-day, emerging changes. McMahon et al. (2014:215) share this view and see change as a norm in South African businesses, where external forces such as globalization, technological changes as well as social, economic and general labour market changes have forced businesses to either adapt or die. Tools such as internal organisational communication are significant resources in ensuring that changes within an organisation are managed and maintained to ensure survival and success. Collalzo (2020:1) suggests that communication is in fact the greatest resource of all and since change is not easily predicated, communication is the resource that binds everything within an organisation.

In addition, Smidts et al. (2001:1052-1053) suggests that most employees highlight internal communication as a major problem in South Africa. The authors identify two significant implications: firstly, the perspective that communication is overlooked as an integral part of change management; and secondly, that communication strategies are dominated by Western theories that are often foreign to South African norms. Likewise, critics such as Meyer and Botha (2004:345-347) and Mutungi et al. (2016: 188-200) have argued that communication has been largely one sided, with a bias towards these western-based models of communication that lack cultural context from a local perspective. This raises concern about whether the current internal communication methods are too colloquial and insufficient for effectively managing emergent change.

For internal communication to be used as a tool to efficiently manage change, it must be appropriate to the needs of the organisation and the employees. Jackson and Louw (2008:17-18) maintain that South Africa still reflects communication approaches that are used by European colonial powers and emphasise that “South Africa needs to develop its own unique approach that builds in the context and indigenous philosophies and values.” As an internal factor that influences change within an organisation, culture is both a factor that initiates change as well as a factor that can manage change. With communication being culturally bound, internal communication can be positioned as a resource to manage change within an organisation. Malek and Yazdanifard (2012: 52) purports that the key to managing change is communication and refers to communication within the change management process as a “crucial lever”.

Given that communication is not only influenced by culture but also plays a crucial role in managing organisational change, it is reasonable to conclude that communication in African contexts requires cultural tailoring. Nkoma (2015:16-17) suggests that although theoretical frameworks within the context of change and communication exist, they are “unexplored in the context of Africa”. Based on the need for a more culturally specific approach to change management, the study aims

to explore the role of internal communication in managing emergent change within an organization.

1.3 Research Problems

The diverse makeup of the South African workforce and the emergent changes that follow from daily interactions highlight how crucial internal communication is to effectively manage these changes. Smidts et al. (2001:1051-1053) believe that internal organisational communication is perceived as an issue by South African employees due to its marginalisation as a critical component of change management and the prevalence of Western communication theories in South African practices. From a South African perspective, the problem is the limited literature on communication practices and processes, especially with regard to their unique function in managing emergent change. Previous researchers such as Invernizzi et al. (2012:483-495), (Kitchen and Daly, 2002:46-53, Simoes and Esposito, 2014:324-341)) have focused on change management of a predetermined or known event such as a merger or retrenchment. These studies were limited to predetermined, structured and planned communication practices within an applied global communications perspective. Furthermore, these studies were also limited particularly to the United States of America (USA) and the European Union (EU). For internal communication practices to be effectively used as a resource to manage emergent change, it equally needs to be culturally appropriate within a South African context.

Nkoma et al. (2015:6) and Kazeroony (2016:161) stress the need for African scholars to “deconstruct the colonial perspective, overcome postcolonial paradoxes and build capacities to produce new knowledge from indigenous African perspectives”. This knowledge is critical in addressing possible postcolonial imbalances and difficulties that may exist in various African contexts and adding to diversity challenges within organisations. With communication being inherently “culturally bound” there is an inevitable differentiation between staff and management

communication processes and practices which could lead to various operational implications (Kazeroony, 2016:161). Added to this, is the need for South African organisations to consistently address diversity challenges to be successful in an ever-changing environment. As demonstrated in a recent study by Deloitte (2020:2-8), diverse workforces are six times more likely to be able to anticipate change and twice as more likely to exceed financial expectations.

As a resource in enhancing diversity that leads to more adaptive and successful workforces, internal organisational communication needs to be culturally appropriate to be harnessed as a resource. Reemphasizing the challenges raised above, including limited literature on emergent change and *glocally* aligned communication processes and practices, this raises concerns as to whether the communication methods and types, channels and communication processes and practices used in managing emerging change are culturally appropriate within a South African context (Matthews and Van Wyk, 2018:2-11, Smidts et al., 2001:1051-1062). Furthermore, with internal organisations communication being critical in establishing connections, the use of the various types, channels and processes of communication to facilitate the process directly impacts the efficiency of communication, including the impact of intercultural communication. Consequently, with communication providing the information that is needed to manage emergent change, the efficiency of communication within an organisation impacts the organisation's ability to manage emergent change. Pirjol (2017:42) maintains that communication is the "key of efficiency within an organisation" and determines whether and to what extent an organisation meets its objectives.

It is the significant proposition of this study that there is a limited integration of South African culture and diversity within internal communication processes and practices in dealing with emerging change within an organisation. (Reynolds and Holwell, 2010:1-23), Kaya and Seleti (2013:31) and Direction (2017:23) agree and state that African traditional thinking has widespread relevance in western society where the element of culture is disregarded. Furthermore, the impact this limited integration has on informing the processes and practices of internal organisational communication and

thus the efficiency of internal organisational communication. Subsequently, the significant impact it has on managing emergent change. In addressing cultural diversity within dynamic organisations, the study advocates for an internal communication process paradigm that incorporates the Chaos Theory to manage cultural diversity inside organisations.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

The study aims to explore the role of internal organisational communication in managing emergent change within a selected automotive group in KwaZulu-Natal.

Based on this, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the efficiency of internal organisational communication in managing emerging change.
2. Examine the appropriateness of current models of internal organisational communication from a *glocal* perspective.
3. Determine the efficiency of current internal organisational communication processes within the various hierarchical levels of the selected organisation under study.
4. To explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes.

1.5 Literature Review

The literature pertaining to the study will be presented over two sections (Chapter 2 and 3). To provide a summary of the literature discussed in Chapter 2, the researcher presents Figure 2.1. The focus points of the three sections are depicted in this picture, which also demonstrates how they are related to one another and help to accomplish the goals of the study.

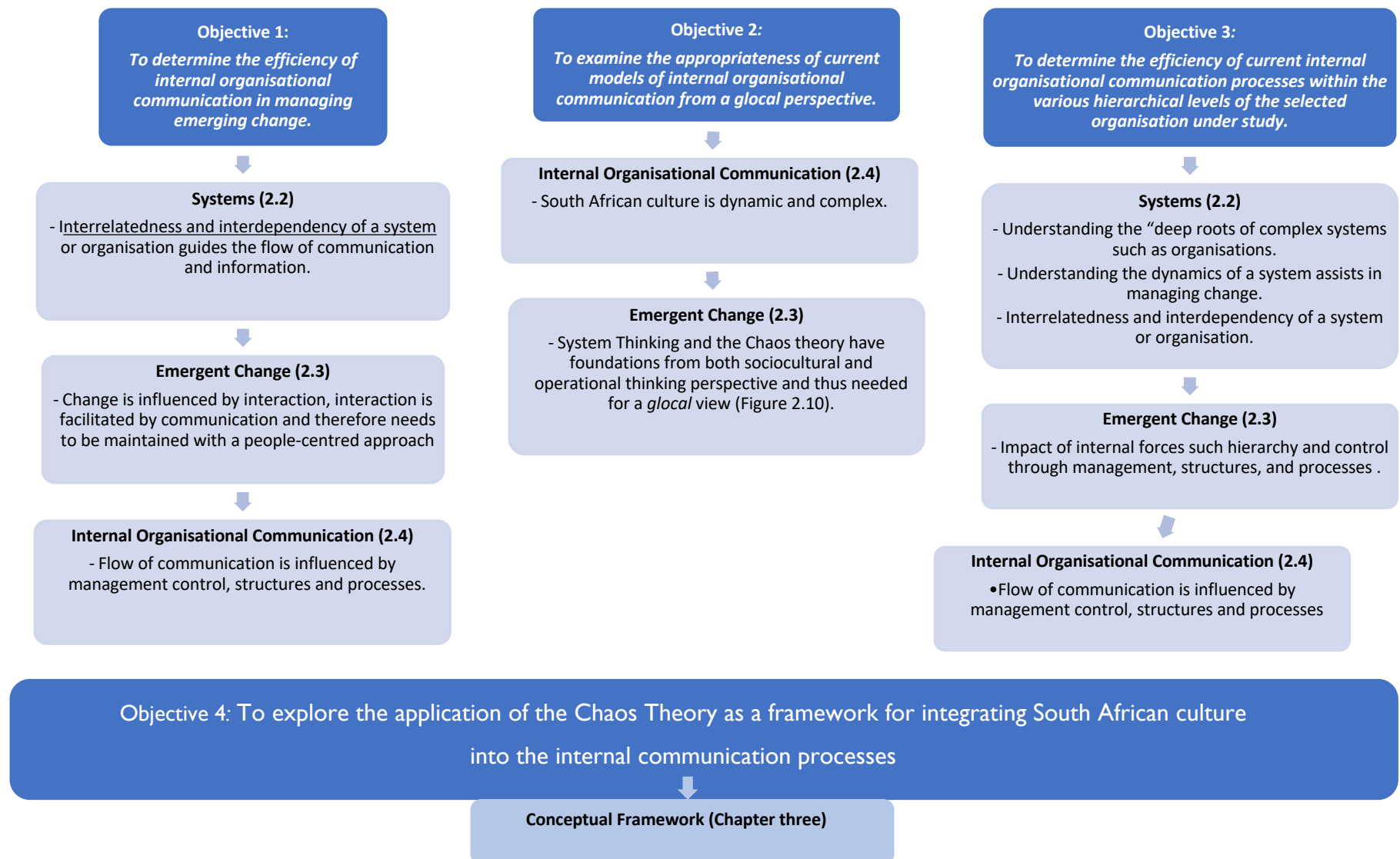


Figure 1.1 – Literature Review Outline and the interconnectedness of the presented theoretical foundation

1.5.1 Systems Thinking and a Chaos Theory Perspective

Within the context of System Thinking, interaction between the subsystems is of primary importance, where these “interactions” in a system are seen as equally independent as the subsystems themselves. However, according to Arnold and Wade (2015:670) to better understand Systems Thinking, it needs to be viewed as a system itself. Therefore, it is a system of thinking about systems. Where Systems Thinking attempts to understand an entire system and the relationship between its parts, the Chaos Theory holds importance within Systems Thinking in that it explains the “why” (Amissah *et al.*, 2020:1).

Within the context of Systems Thinking, managers according to Stacey and Mowles (2015:60) are seen as an “objective observer standing outside the system” and propose that stability is maintained by rules. This view alludes to the notion that managers attempt to maintain stability through various control methods and processes. The dominant discourse of managers to focus on control to achieve organisational stability ignores the fundamental position of the Chaos Theory that control is an illusion and that “chaos” lends to a more responsive and adaptable systems. However, this study argues that in order for a system to perform optimally, a manager cannot just be an objective observer but needs to be actively involved in the process of change.

Managers need to move away from control where it is central to their management style and communication channels and practices. Liska *et al.* (2012:182) refers to these controlled communication channels and practices as restrictive routines that can distort the impact of change and system failures. Essentially, system design is limited in keep up with organisational changes. Organisational systems are generally formulated after the change has occurred or in anticipation of a predetermined change. Stacey *et al.* (2000:20) propose that this is why managers find that systems often do not have the desired impact, where there is a gap between what happens and what is expected. Thus, alluding to the distortion of the impact of change as described by Liska *et al.* (2012:182).

1.5.2 Emergent Change Management

Most definitions of change fundamentally subscribe to the view that change is a process and does not occur in isolation. However, Van Tonder (2004:6) offers a definition of change within an operational context and how change is a “process resulting in a difference of varying magnitude” and how at organisational level “the turbulence and rate of change and innovation experienced in the operating context of organisations are equally evident”. Emphasis is on emerging change and the accelerated and continuous changes that an organisation is exposed to in a dynamic environment.

According to Van Tonder (2006:9) management tends to focus on the “technical elements and requirements of change” often neglecting the human element within the change process, including the impact of culture and the critical importance of internal organisational communication. Technical elements, such as rules, procedures and systems are the means through which change is managed. However, Stacey, Griffin and Shaw (2004:59-60) state that although these are essential to the functioning of an organisation, members’ interactions and communication on a day-to-day basis is informal and freely chosen and therefore cannot be controlled. In the same way, with internal communication as the driver in these interactions, it is the position of this study that emergent change can be maintained through flexible internal organisational communication channels and practices that are culturally representative and thus more responsive to change.

However, Van Tonder (2004:9) states that individual change and organisational change remains “undetected” and “understated”. With organisations being in a constant state of change with changes varying from large scale such as mergers and retrenchments, to smaller day-to-day emerging change. When change occurs people tend to draw on knowledge that they learnt previously that may assist them in responding to changes (Conner, 1998:13-14). This in turn could mean that when there is insufficient knowledge to draw onto to address the change at hand, that the response to these changes is not appropriate and therefore impacts the outcome. Employees actively search for new knowledge to be able to respond to change. Connor (1998:13-14) argues that there could be misunderstanding during the process of assigning meaning as well as applying the

acquired knowledge. Internal organisational communication processes that lack cultural context could add to these misunderstandings and could then directly affect the ability of an employee to adapt to change and thereby create an unaddressed change. This new knowledge and searching thereof might include “gossiping” and informal communication as a platform to attain new knowledge. Almaney (1974:35-43) states that without an efficient communication process, an organisation cannot optimally respond to changes and subsequently suggests that an organisation could be able to survive but would not, however, operate at optimal or an efficient level.

1.5.3 Internal Organisational Communication

To maintain a system that is responsive to emergent change, it is crucial that an organisation recognizes the indispensability of communication as a maintenance tool and not just as a reactive tool in predetermined changes. Albaney (1974:41-42) describes how as a system binder, communication not only integrates all the subsystems, but it does so in such a way that the internal stability of the system or organisation is maintained thus emphasizing the role of internal organisational communication in maintaining emerging change. Almaney (1974:42) further states that: “It is inconceivable to have an organisation without communication. It is also inconceivable to have an efficient organisation without efficient communication”.

However, for internal organisational communication to be efficient it needs to be a two-way process of creating shared meaning and not just sharing information and knowledge that is driven from the top. This process needs to not only be facilitated by appropriate communication channels and the free flow of communication but also with appropriate practices such as intercultural communication. Shared meaning within this concept includes interaction at every level where culture and context is integrated into the process (Addicott, 2016:46). The problem lies within the fact that even though organisations do see the importance of good internal communication in achieving operational success, there is often a disconnect where managers often find it hard to see the link between “what gets said” and “what gets done” (Kitchen & Daly 2002:49). Authors such as Lipitt (1997:18), Spike (1995:17-23) Spike (1995) and Kitchen (2002) explain that the importance of communication is essential in the change process, however, these authors

only hypothesize the role of communication within predetermined changes and not emergent changes. There is limited research on the importance of internal organisational communication from a maintenance perspective that sees internal organisational communication as an iterative process of shared meaning.

1.6 Research Methodology

As one of the cornerstone of the study, the research methodology outlines the framework through which the study was conducted. This includes key sections such as research design, target population, sampling method, data collection instrument and data analysis.

1.6.1 Research Design

In assessing whether existing processes of internal organisational communication are adequately meeting a South African perspective, a quantitative research method was applied in the study. In addressing relevant communication issues, Villagran et al. (2015:408) state that a quantitative research method can statistically measure outcomes with meaningful comparison. In exploring the relationship between internal organisational communication and emerging change, the study made use of a non-experimental cross-sectional design where data were collected at one point in time. A cross-sectional design allows the researcher to study multiple outcomes from a single study that can also easily be replicated in other contexts (Bangdiwala 2019).

1.6.2 Target Population

The unit of analysis for this study and the target population was an automotive industry group in South Africa that includes services such as vehicle sales, vehicle finance, servicing and truck hire. The company under study had a total of five divisions in KwaZulu-Natal province, which included six brands incorporated into the five divisions (Holmes, 2021:1). With the study's objective to determine the efficiency of internal communication processes within the different hierarchal levels, the study included the following levels of management and staff: Managing Directors; Executives; Managers and Foreman; and selected general staff that report to these respective managers.

1.6.3 Sampling Method

The purposive sampling technique was used for this study. According to Maxwell (2012:235) a purposeful sample is a sample where “particular settings, persons or events are selected deliberately in order to provide information that cannot be got as well from other choices”. Due to the nature of the study which is examining independent variables within the various hierarchal levels of the organisation under study, two different sampling strategies for these hierarchal levels was used. For staff in management positions, such as Directors, Foremen, Executives and Managers, the criterion sampling method was used. Criterion sampling allowed the researcher to select a sample based on pre-established criterion, such as a management role which allowed the study to unearth in-depth information (Cohen & Crabtree 2006:1).

Maximum variation sampling was used for general staff that included diverse characteristics including language, age, gender and job title. Siegle (2021:1) states that maximum variation adds value in that it can reveal common patterns within the target population as well as adding diversity to the study. The exclusion criteria was staff who do not have permanent contracts and who have less than 6 months’ service. The two sampling strategies were used concurrently.

1.6.4 Data collection Instrument

The study made use of the primary data collection method by executing a survey. According to Goudge (2006:15-19) the survey method plays an important role in innovation as it not only identifies problem areas but can also assess the efficiency of the various processes within internal organisational communication. The survey instrument used is a questionnaire with structured questions for both sample groups.

1.6.5 Data Analysis

The researcher made use of IBM® Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS®) software version 28.0. According to IBM (2021a:1) the SPSS® software “enables you to quickly dig deeper into your data, making it a much more effective tool.” The SPSS® software was used to analyze the close ended questions. In order to investigate the

connection between internal communication practices and their function in managing emergent change, this study used a multifaceted data analysis approach. Numerous quantitative analytical techniques, including cross-tabulation, central tendency measures and ANOVA were used in the analysis. According to Davis et al. (2011:468) through the triangulation of results and application of various techniques, multifaceted data analysis not only yields stronger results and addresses more expansive research questions, but it also makes up for the shortcomings of individual techniques, providing a more thorough and persuasive understanding of phenomena.

1.6.6 Pretesting

The questionnaire was pretested. According to Hashim et al. (2022:501), pretesting adds validity to the study and identifies practical problems with the study to ensure that the study does not run the risk of incomplete or invalid data. For the purpose of reducing sampling error and increasing questionnaire response rate, the researcher followed a pretesting procedure as described by Hilton (2017:21-22) that includes utilizing the think-aloud technique to probe questions.

1.6.7 Delimitations and Scope

The study was limited to the group's five divisions and excluded the group's Executive Committee and Executive Council. With each division having its own management structure, the scope of the study was segmented according to the group's five divisions and the brands within these divisions. However, the researcher will also be analyzing common patterns based on holistic communication from Head Office.

1.6.8 Credibility and Trustworthiness

In establishing trustworthiness, the research used various methods such as internal and external validity, reliability and objectivity. To enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study, the researcher used triangulation to address any possible shortfalls in the study and cross-checked the information from different perspectives.

1.6.9 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The participants were provided with informed consent documents before data were collected, where the participants were informed of the level of privacy and confidentiality that was upheld in the study. Although identifying information was needed for the consent form, Wiles *et al.* (2008:417-418) suggests that once the informed consent documents have been signed that they are removed immediately from the data to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

1.6.9.1 *Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act)*

On the 1st of July 2021, the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act) No. 4 of 2013 was enacted in South Africa with the purpose to protect South Africans constitutional right to privacy with regards to the storage and processing of personal information. This act extends to the field of research but includes certain exclusions, exemptions and exceptions that directly relate to the sample of this study. For this study, the exclusion relates to processing “de-identified” information which is defined as information that identifies the data subject (POPIA, 2021:2).

The respondents’ names and surnames were not collected but instead they were provided with a respondent number ensuring that a respondent was not identifiable during the processing and analyzing of the data. Furthermore, a “motivated intruder-test” that is a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), will be carried out to determine that information is in fact de-identified and that respondents cannot be identified.

1.6.10 Ethical Considerations

The Durban University of Technology’s (DUT) prescribed ethical process was ensured for the study. This includes voluntary participation by participants, anonymity and informed consent by participants. The ethical clearance certificate is provided in Annexure A. In addition, a gatekeeper’s letter was obtained from the organisation under investigation in which the ethical considerations as outlined in the contract between the researcher and the company under investigation was upheld. This includes the

agreement that the company under investigation will not be known. For the purpose of upholding anonymity, the gatekeeper's letter was not included.

1.7 Key definitions

<i>Apartheid</i>	"The rigid system of total racial segregation" in South Africa during 1948 to 1994. The country's population was divided into "whites", "blacks" and "coloureds". The white minority imposed extreme laws on movement and groups were also segregated to specific geographical areas based on race. (Lucas, 2022:para. 1-4).
<i>Emergent Change</i>	Unlike planned change, emergent change is change that occurs from the "day-to-day" changes (Burnes, 2017:363). From an organisational perspective, emergent change constantly occurs because of the day-to-day actions, interactions and decisions made by all members of an organisations.
<i>Entropic</i>	Pertaining to entropy or the measure to which a system is random or chaotic (Merriam-Webster 2022:para. 1a).
<i>Emoji</i>	A small symbol, icon or image that can be used in electronic communication, such as email, WhatsApp, Facebook messenger to name a few, that communicates emotion. (Merriam-Webster 2022:para. 1c).
<i>Diversity</i>	"Diversity refers to the presence of people who, as a group, have a wide range of characteristics, seen and unseen, which they were born or have acquired. These characteristics may include their gender identity, race or ethnicity" (Deloitte 2020:12).
<i>Mediated communication</i>	Mediated communication is communication that is sent through some sort of information communication technology that is contrasted to face-to-face communication, such as Zoom or Ms Teams (Parasian and Yuliaty, 2020:9-10)
<i>Glocal</i>	The integration of both global and local practices, thinking and/or processes (Sedda, 2008:1-2). From a South African perspective,

	<i>glocal</i> means adapting global practices, thinking and/or processes that include local considerations such as culture that is unique to South Africa.
<i>POPI Act</i>	On the 1 st of July 2021, the Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act) No. 4 of 2013 was enacted in South Africa. The purpose of the act is to protect South Africans with regards to their constitutional right to privacy and governs the processing and storage of personal information (POPIA 2021:2).
<i>Industry 4.0</i>	Industry 4.0 refers to the fourth industrial revolution and the digitization of manufacturing which has increased the interconnectivity of technology with the introduction of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and robots. This has led to changes in social patterns and technological advances (Marr, 2018:para. 1).
<i>Lockdown</i>	As a result of the COVID19 pandemic, the term <i>lockdown</i> was officially included as the word of the year in the <i>Collins Dictionary</i> and is defined as “the imposition of stringent restrictions on travel, social interaction and access to public spaces” as a result of the COVID19 pandemic.” (BBC, 2020:para. 5).
<i>South African culture</i>	Due to South Africa’s rich cultural diversity and history of colonization and migration, the South African culture cannot be defined by traditional terms according to race and specifically cultural groups. For this reason, there is no appropriate definition but the description of being “diverse” (SAHO, 2022a:para. 1-5).

1.8 Chapter Outline

Chapter 1

This chapter presented an introduction to the study, including the following topics: background of the study; research problem; aims and objectives of the study; research methodology and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2

This chapter will present the literature in three sections. Firstly, it offers a detailed framework of systems including definition, systems evolution, the role of communication in systems as well as the various Systems Theories. The chapter also introduces the Chaos theory, one of the systems theories and offers the theory as a framework for managing emergent change in dynamic, modern organisations with specific reference to socio-cultural perspective. Thereafter, the literature on emergent change is presented by presenting the history and evolution of change management, the colonial influences on emergent change and the dynamics of emergent change. Subsequently, the chapter presents the literature on emergent change with reference to a sociocultural, operational and Chaos Theory application. Finally, the chapter offers emergent change as a maintenance process in managing interactions within modern and dynamic organisations. Lastly, the literature on internal organisational communication is presented. The chapter presents the history of communication and its evolution. Thereafter, the chapter introduces and defines internal organisational communication. The chapter proceeds to present the current internal organisational communication models and their appropriateness from a *glocal* perspective. The channels, types and flow of internal organisational communication are discussed in order to explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes.

Chapter 3

This chapter presents the conceptual framework for the study against the backdrop of the Chaos Theory. The chapter presents the interconnectedness and gaps in literature as presented in Chapter 2 of the literature review.

Chapter 4

This chapter presents the research methodology for the study including research design, target population, sampling method, data collection instrument and the data analysis software that will be used in the study. The chapter also presents the delimitations, scope,

credibility and trustworthiness of the study. Added to this, the chapter will present anonymity and confidentiality with specific reference to the Protection of Personal information Act (POPI Act) and its impact on the study.

Chapter 5

The chapter presents the results and data from the study by providing the presentation of data and a comprehensive analysis thereof. The chapter will be divided into two sections. Section A will analyze and present the data from the closed-ended questions, while Section B will present the data from the open-ended questions in the form of text-analysis.

Chapter 6

This chapter draws up the conclusions of the study. The recommendations based on the research findings will be specified. Lastly, suggestions for future research will be included.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided the background of study as well as the aims and objectives. The problem statement highlighted that much research has been done on planned change that included planned communication strategies but emergent change remains unexplored. Given the importance of a cultural context within the communication process, the study suggests that there is a need for a *glocal*, internal organisation communication approach to managing emergent change. The chapter introduced the relevant literature pertaining to the study as well as presented an overview of the research methodology that will be used in the study. Key definitions and a chapter outline were also presented in this chapter, making special reference to the structure of the literature review in Chapters 2 and 3. The next chapter reviews the literature on systems and systems thinking, with the introduction of the Chaos Theory and therefore reviews the literature on emergent change and internal communication.

CHAPTER 2

THE SYSTEMS THINKING APPROACH TO MANAGING EMERGENT CHANGE WITH INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL COMMUNICATION

2.1 Introduction

As the vital component of every social system or organisation, effective communication is essential to successfully manage change in diverse workforces that are continuously changing. In system theories, communication is the nexus. Almaney (1974:35) calls attention to this by calling communication a "binder," particularly in the setting of open, dynamic systems like organisations. The success of these system theories or sciences is largely dependent on communication, notwithstanding the variety of system theories present in the larger theoretical framework.

Communication is a fundamental component of any organisation, according to Katz and Kahn (1966:223) who characterise it as a "social process of the broadest relevance in the functioning of any group, organisation or society". Acknowledging the vital role that communication plays in the operation of organisations is especially relevant when dealing with transformation in diverse workforces. Understanding how changes occur in such dynamic situations requires an embrace of system theories, an understanding of systems and a Systems Thinking approach to communication.

When it comes to diverse workforces that are always changing, good communication is essential for successful adaptation. It encourages communication, cooperation and understanding between people with different experiences and viewpoints. Understanding the complexities of human interactions within these dynamic organisational systems is made possible by the insights from systems thinking informed by systems theories, which are crucial for navigating change in these different environments.

The literature will be arranged methodically, starting with an introduction of systems thinking and organisational dynamics. The foundational theories of the General Systems Theory (GST), Cybernetics and the Chaos Theory will be presented in enhancing the understanding of the principles that underpin systems thinking. Building on this theoretical foundation, the discussion that follows will emphasise how important communication is to

the study of organisational dynamics and systems thinking. The evolution of communication will be contextualised historically, highlighting its ongoing importance in forming organisational processes.

The following section will focus on the development of a systematic communication approach, specifically on how communication helps to facilitate emergent change and negotiate the intricacies of organisational dynamics. To effectively integrate the theoretical viewpoints of emergent change within organisational structures, this section aims to explain and clarify the notion of emergence within the context of systems thinking. Particular focus will be placed on examining the complex field of internal organisational communication and stressing its vital significance and diverse function in promoting emergent change within the complex systems of organisations.

2.2 Systems Thinking and Organisational Dynamics

With Systems Thinking being literally “a system of thinking about systems”, modern organisations need a holistic approach to managing a complex system that is in a constant state of change and more specifically emergent change (Arnold and Wade, 2015 :669). The process of managing emergent change with efficient internal organisational communication lends to a systems-thinking mindset. Systems Thinking places critical importance on the concept of emergence and the fundamental view that a system needs to be analyzed holistically and not merely just breaking the system up into different parts to look for patterns.

Following no predefined pattern, Truex et al. (1999:117-123) explains that social features of an organisation such as culture, decision making and shared meaning are constantly changing and that the organisation is always in this process of negotiating these social elements. Therefore, using internal organisational communication to manage emergent change in an organisation cannot be achieved with strategic, planned approaches. It lends more to a process that links the various sub-systems or hierarchal levels together, identifying interrelationships to rather maintain a system with efficient communication versus controlling it. Levy (1994:170) likewise adds that within chaotic systems that long term planning is “not only difficult but essentially impossible.”

Fundamentally, systems thinking recognises that an entity's parts are interrelated and form a cohesive whole with dynamic interactions. Understanding the basic idea of a "system" enables us to see the intricacies of organisational structures and procedures, which opens the door to more sophisticated approaches to managing emergent change with internal organisational communication.

2.2.1 What is a System?

Central to systems approaches is the concept of "systems". According to Asby (2021:16) defining the term "systems" is often debated but the author defines a system as a "*purposeful input → process → output structure*". Various types of systems exist, each with a purpose, such as a biological system (human body) to social systems that are referred to as complex systems. However, the basic definition of what a system is remains the same. Merriam-Webster (2022d:1) defines a system as "a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a whole". The term "item" can also be described as a collection of parts or "sub-systems". Systems are further defined as being either an open or closed system.

Open systems are systems who exchange information with their environment, whereas closed systems have little to no interaction with their environment. Within the context of the study, an organisation is an open system. For example, input in the form of communication from management regarding company policy changes, produces a specific output from staff such as compliance or in some situations an industrial action. This describes a process of exchange between the organisation and its environment. Conversely, an example of a closed system within an organisational context would be a traditional, hierarchical company with a strict chain of command. If information is flowing from the top down with limited feedback, the system would be a closed system as there is limited interaction with the environment.

Open systems are in a constant stage of interaction. The interaction is with its sub-systems and its environment. These interactions eventually lead to the transformation of internal processes. In simple terms, a change in one sub-system causes a change in another and can therefore transform the entire system. Mele *et al.* (2010:129) state that

an open system exchanges “energy, matter and information with its environment” and includes transformation of elements that lead to homeostasis, self-regulation, equilibrium/balance, autopoiesis and equifinality/common finality. Although these elements in a complex system like an organisation are later discussed in detail, the definitions below offers a systems perspective of what interactions within a system should aim to achieve.

Element in an open and complex system	Definition
Homeostasis	A state of equilibrium achieved in a system during the exchange of information between the system and its environment (Mele <i>et al.</i> , 2010:129).
Self-regulation	The system’s use of information to adapt the system to external changes (Kloot, 1997:70)
Equilibrium	Is a state of balanced or stability within a system (Mele <i>et al.</i> , 2010:129).
Autopoiesis	A self-organising feature of a system that adapts the system to align itself with the external environment (Mele <i>et al.</i> , 2010).
Equifinality	A point where a system reaches the same state from different paths or conditions (Mele <i>et al.</i> , 2010:129)
Common finality	A system reaches common finality when all its parts work together to achieve the final goal (Mele <i>et al.</i> , 2010:130).
Multifinality	A system can reach dissimilar end points from similar initial conditions (Gharajedaghi, 2011a:49).

Table 2.1 – Definition of elements that can be transformed in an open, complex system

As presented above and confirmed by Montuori (2011:415-416), “living systems need interactions and exchanges with their environment for their survival”. These exchanges, be it information via communication or interaction by means of social interaction, an open system requires this “energy” to not only function but to survive. Communication within living, open systems such as organisations is the binding element that allows the systems and sub-systems to function together to survive and thrive (Twente, 2003:32).

Organisations are not only open systems but are complex systems. Systems theories can be used as a framework to solve many complicated problems and system issues. When looking at systems, it is important to look at the smaller components of the system, within the context of the larger system. Fundamentally, a system is made up of components that are interdependent of each other. By looking at the components in isolation and without looking at the larger system as a whole, the entire system could collapse.

The interdependency of each of the components means even the smallest of changes to any of the component could result in a domino effect, thus, ultimately changing the system as a whole. This is also true of large and complicated systems that are composed of smaller systems. Changes to the smaller systems cannot be made without taking into consideration its potential effect on the larger system. Foundational theories are essential for setting the theoretical underpinning for systems thinking. These theories, which include the General Systems Theory (GST), Cybernetics and the Chaos Theory offer the conceptual foundation required to comprehend the complex interactions of interdependent components in systems.

2.2.2 System Theories

Systems Theories are often described by most theorists as the “interdisciplinary” study of systems (Mele et al., 2010:126, Capra, 1997:36-38) (Senge 1990; Capra 1997; Mele, *et al* 2010). Conversely, the term “transdisciplinary” is frequently used as it encompasses the study of various disciplines or branches of knowledge to form a new approach. According to Caldwell (2019), although the term “interdisciplinary” and “transdisciplinary” are both adjectives that describe more than one branch of knowledge, the difference is that “transdisciplinary” results in combining and integrating different disciplines or knowledge to create something new in what is referred to as a systems approach. Montuori (2011:414-421) goes on to explain and agrees that a systems approach is not limited to one discipline and draws concepts and ideas from system theories such as the GST, Cybernetics, the Chaos theory and Complexity theories to create a new way of thinking for creative research. These fundamental theories inform the principles of feedback, adaptation and emergence as well as the flexibility and resilience inherent in systems thinking.

2.2.2.1 General Systems Theory

The GST was first introduced in the 1960's by biologist and philosopher, Ludwig von Bertalanffy. Although von Bertalanffy's theory was initially concerning the study of the origin and function of natural and social systems, the theory has since developed to other fields of study such as psychology, history, ecology and philosophy to name a few (Montuori, 2011:416-417). One of the foremost principles of the GST is the study of systems in respect to *wholeness*. Cordon (2013:16) states that GST "is the general science of *wholeness*" and is a cornerstone principle in the GST. Day (2010:40) states:

The system in an integrated coherent entity is more than the mere composite of independent elements. This wholeness transcends the sum of the system's component elements . . . a change in one part of the system may cause a change in many parts (subsystems) of the larger system and in the larger system itself.

Mele, Pels and Polese (2010:126) state that within the GST, a single behaviour from an individual part is different from when these parts interact together. Organisations as organic systems and social systems are highly complex and made up of the interaction of their members. Interaction and relationships within the context of organisations have drawn inspiration from the GST. Ludwig (2015:605-625) positions a system understanding as important in understanding behavioural systems that exist in systems such as modern organisations. From an information and thus, communication perspective, interactions and behaviour within a system are largely dependent on the information that is available. With the flow of information within an organisation being determined by the efficiency of internal communication, communication is central to managing behaviour within a system. Zinc (2021:2) agrees and states that communication fulfils many roles in an organisation including motivating employees, information sharing and changing perceptions but also helps in "controlling organisational members behaviours".

Systems sciences or the study of systems is a transdisciplinary area of formal enquiry. According to Boulding (1956:197) the General Systems Theory provides a framework "to

hang the flesh and blood of particular disciplines and particular subject matters in an orderly and coherent corpus of knowledge". Interactions within organic, open systems are complex by nature and within organisations, these behaviours are further complicated by the influence of hierarchy, culture, communication and external influences to name a few. Based on the comprehensive ideas of GST, cybernetics explores the study of communication and control in systems.

2.2.2.2 *Cybernetics*

Ashby (1957:1) explains cybernetics as the art of *steermanship*, where coordination, regulation and control are the central themes. Cybernetics first appeared in the 19th century by Plato within the context of the "study of self-governance". Its roots have also been attributed to French physicist, André-Marie Ampère in the sciences of government. However, the concept of cybernetics is mostly attributed to mathematician Norbet Weiner in the book entitled "Cybernetics, or the study of control and communication in the animal and the machine" (Wiener, 1948). According to Heylighen and Joslyn (2001:3) cybernetics grew as a result of interdisciplinary meetings held between 1944 to 1953 between post-war intellectuals which included Claude Shannon, who developed the "information theory of communication".

Although cybernetics was founded during the same period as GST, Laszlo and Krippner (1998:12) emphasise that cybernetics is a "disciplinary sub-area" of the GST and should be viewed as "two facets of a single approach". What is important to note is that while GST focuses more on structure within a system, cybernetics focuses more on function, one of the focus areas in this study. Ashby (1957:1) explains cybernetics as not "what *is* this thing" but rather "what does this thing *do*". Focus is less on what the system is made up of but more so on how it functions in complex environments.

In the 1970's, *second-order cybernetics* theories gained momentum and saw "first-order cybernetics" as being a mechanistic approach and not having enough emphasis on self-organisation, autonomy and the role of the observer. However, Heylighen and Joslyn (2001:157) argue that they should not be seen as two separate approaches but more so as a progressive development of the disciplinary field. The authors argue that the

founding fathers of cybernetics did agree with the importance of self-organisation, autonomy and the role of the observer. Furthermore, the intellectuals who developed the second-order cybernetics theory were involved in the development of first-order cybernetics. Therefore, the study will refer to cybernetics in general and not specifically distinguish between first- and second-order cybernetics.

Systems are complex and dynamic in nature and according to Clemson (1991:26), systems behave in a complex manner that can see small subtle changes in a system resulting in large scale system behaviours. This cause-and-effect nature of a system is what systems theories share. The key notion within cybernetics is circular causality, otherwise known as feedback. Cybernetics relies on the concepts of positive and negative feedback to regulate and control a system. Positive feedback is when a system's existing condition is amplified or reinforced by a particular action or occurrence. This amplification and perturbations lead to a system moving away from equilibrium. According to Trifonovs-Bogdanovs and Zabiroy (2018:21) positive feedback “amplifies deviations in order to produce destabilizing conditions for the system under observation.” Negative feedback, on the other hand, combats any existing conditions from a predetermined point or desired state, which helps to stabilize and control a system. This kind of feedback is crucial for preserving equilibrium and homeostasis. De Landa (2021:68) defines negative feedback as being “deviation-counteracting”, where positive feedback is “deviation-amplifying”.

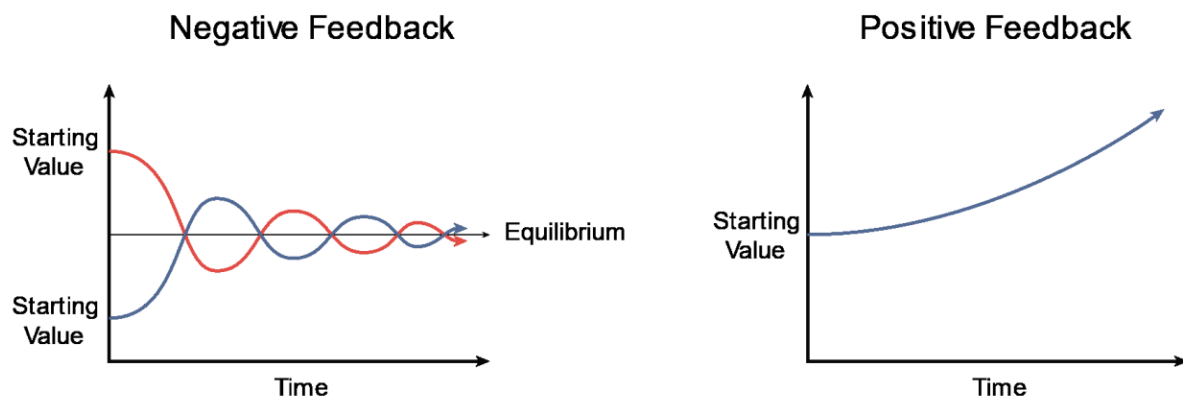


Figure 2.1 Negative and Positive Feedback (Trifonovs-Bogdanovs and Zabiroy, 2018:50)

As presented in Figure 2.1, negative feedback converges to maintain equilibrium, whereas positive feedback diverges and moves away from equilibrium. The process of positive and negative feedback interactions results in emergent patterns and essentially sees feedback within a coordination function. According to Clemson (1991:107) management within an organisation are seen as feedback loops and their operation is a process that needs to be controlled. In other words, the author states that “management is feedback designed to ensure that the operation produces a desired outcome”. Miller (2003:63) agrees and suggests that from a system point of view positive and negative feedback are used in a cybernetic process to achieve an organisations’ goals and objectives.

However, cybernetics although one of the most prominent system theories, has been met with criticism from the perspectives of its appropriateness for human systems and the diverse nature of human interaction. From the standpoint of a theoretical foundation for diverse employees and from a *glocal* perspective, the following criticisms of Cybernetics are presented:

- Cybernetics is founded on the premise that complex systems can be disassembled into individual components that may be manipulated and controlled through feedback processes in a reductionist and mechanist’s approach. It is said that this mechanical and reductionist approach oversimplifies complex social and human systems while disregarding their dynamic and unpredictable nature (August, 2022:290).
- Efficiency and control are frequently given precedence in cybernetics over morality and the welfare of society. The prioritisation of optimisation may result in inadvertent outcomes including the dehumanisation of people, breaches of privacy and the maintenance of bias against marginalised communities. Cybernetics’ effect, according to critics, encourages a society in which people are seen as little more than parts of a machine. In the words of Franzini Tibaldeo (2015:13), "a human being is deprived of his specificity."

The dynamic nature of complex systems and equally the impact human behaviour has on these systems, limits the appropriateness of cybernetics in its application to diverse

workforces, such as those in South Africa. Unlike the Chaos Theory, Radej (2021:para. 5) explains that cybernetics embeds the concept of chaos and adapts it into systems, whereas the Chaos Theory treats it as equal. Even though the Chaos Theory was developed and inspired by the basic principles of GST and cybernetics, it is significantly different in its view of change or chaos as a resource (Rensburg and Ströh, 1998:53).

2.2.2.3 *The Chaos Theory*

“Chaos Theory points to the importance of developing guidelines and decision rules to cope with complexity, and of searching for nonobvious and indirect means to achieving goals” (Levy, 1994:168)

Throughout the literature on systems and in systems theories, the central and common feature is the interrelatedness and interdependency of a system. With the exitance of a reciprocal effect in systems, change often leads to chaos. At the turn of the 20th century, the Chaos Theory was initially discovered by scientist, Henri Poincare who “demonstrated that simple systems can produce behaviors so complex that they are neither expected nor predictable” (Bussolari and Goodell, 2009:99). In essence, Poincare determined that similar causes do not necessarily cause similar effects. However, the Chaos Theory was made popular in the mid 1980’s by Edward Lorenz, a meteorologist whose experimentation with computational models in the atmosphere discovered one of the fundamental principles of the Chaos Theory – the *butterfly effect* (Todnem, 2005:369-380). Lorenz found that there was a “sensitive dependence on initial conditions” within systems which led to the popular saying that “the flapping of a butterflies wings on one of the worlds can cause a tornado on the other end of the world.” Levy (1994:167-168) adds that the Chaos Theory was initially established in the context of physical sciences, however, due to the apparent complex and unpredictable nature of social, ecological and economic systems, there has been recognition that the concepts of the Chaos Theory can apply to various social disciplines as well.

Furthermore, as one of the systems theories, the Chaos Theory shares similar views with both the GST and dybernetics, with regards to seeing a system as a whole versus individual parts in isolation. The Chaos Theory postulates that there is an inherent order

in chaos and Cordon (2013:16) states that chaos often exposes this order and therefore, makes us turn our attention to the “whole” and not the “parts”. From an organisational perspective, this places emphasis on not looking at issues and challenges in an organisation in isolation. An organisation with interrelated parts or departments and roles that work together towards a common goal, relies heavily on human interaction and action to achieve these goals. Bussolari and Goodell (2009:99) criticizes scientists for seeing human behaviour as something that can be explained logically and how it can be changed through certain formulas. This simplistic view of human behaviour lends to a cause-and-effect view of change.

The Chaos Theory, however, acknowledges that complexity of the interaction within an organisation and proposes that chaos caused by this complexity can reveal patterns and thus improve predictability. This in turn makes the application of the Chaos Theory as a principle for managing emergent change in an organisation an essential management skill. Levy (1994:168) states that “despite the apparent applicability of the Chaos Theory to the field of business strategy, there has been surprisingly little work in this area”. Therefore, the Chaos Theory will form a central part of the literature and conceptual framework within this study. The researcher proposes the Chaos Theory as a process for managing emergent change, with internal organisational communication as the tool for driving this process. To understand the importance of the Chaos Theory as a framework for managing emergent change as well as the laying of the theoretical framework for the conceptual framework, the author will present the key principles that govern the Chaos Theory.

a. The Six Principles of the Chaos Theory

In the field of organisational dynamics and systems thinking, it is essential to comprehend the complex dance of chaos theory. The unpredictability of complex systems is revealed through the chaos theory, which is based on six fundamental principles: the Butterfly Effect, Bifurcation, Non-linear Scale and Holism, Fragmentation, Self-Organization and the Edge of Chaos. The theoretical foundation is laid in this section, which explores the fundamental ideas of chaos theory and how they apply to organisational dynamics.

According to Larney (2020:41) the “chaos theory still seems difficult to understand and implement in contemporary organisations”.

By using the chaotic lens, we can better understand the interconnection, sensitivity to starting conditions and possibility of emergent patterns that form the structure of an organisation as we navigate the complex systems within it. These ideas not only make sense given the inherent unpredictability of organisational systems but they also show how to respond adaptably to change. This section will provide the theoretical framework that will inform the conceptual framework in Chapter 3. The six principles of the chaos theory are presented below:

b. (i) Butterfly Effect and Bifurcation

The butterfly effect refers to an idea that the flapping of a butterfly’s wings on one side of the world can cause a tornado on the other side of the world. The technical name for the butterfly effect is the “sensitive dependence to initial conditions” and according to Tiplady (2003:4) “implies that outcomes can vary significantly with just a small variation in the initial inputs”. Furthermore, if two systems that are similar but differ by even a small variation, can over time, drastically differ. Time is an important factor in the process of initial conditions and puts light on the element of predictability in a system. Consequently, the impact of time on initial conditions or changes has an exponential impact. Bussolari and Goodell (2009:87) state that “if one knows the current state of a system and even if one might be able to make reasonable predictions in the short term, one will not be able to predict the path of development continuously over time”. These “paths” that develop are because of the transitions during change and thus reveal exponential variations in a system. When these paths lead to sudden, chaotic changes, this is known as bifurcation or the bifurcation point.

Larney (2020:41) defines the bifurcation point “as the cause of a sudden change in the system’s direction, characteristics, and outcome”. From a management perspective, Tiplady (2003:4) suggests that due to the effect initial conditions (*butterfly effect*) has on the final outcome or how small changes can have a large effect, it views management’s role within an organisation as being critical and influences the final outcomes. For

example, an operations manager of a manufacturing company could abruptly modifies the production plan and sends out a vague email. The production crew becomes confused due to unclear information, which causes delays, missed deadlines and increased frustration. This detrimental butterfly effect demonstrates how ineffective management communication can impede productivity and cause workflow disruptions.

Wheatley (1994:75-77) presents a view that it is only natural for management to want to stop changes or suppress changes when they first appear. However, even when a change is suppressed by management, Wheatley suggests that it remains logged in the system and then a process of repetition or bifurcation occurs that sees this small change amplified to a point where it cannot be ignored. This process suggests that even in large systems or organisations, an individual or small group of people at local level can be the catalyst for change within the entire organisation.

The analogy of the *butterfly effect* holds significance in the above example as it shows how something so small and seemingly insignificant can have such a large impact. In Wheatley (1994:96) view, catalysts for change or bifurcation such as individuals and groups in organisations are what the author refers to as “revolutionaries”. He continues to say that these revolutionaries must not be allowed to be “diffused into the larger system too early” as they have links to the other parts of the system. Although the author’s view appropriately emphasizes the impact catalysts for change can have on the entire organisation, it however, implies that their actions have a negative impact on the system. In contrast to this view, the researcher suggests that these revolutionaries or employees that are catalysts for change in an organisation should be “maintained” or managed, not constrained and limited as suggested by Wheatley. The Chaos Theory emphasizes that changes cannot occur if there is no destabilization or chaos and, therefore, the system needs change to grow and thrive. Bifurcation points, although chaotic, do follow a pattern and if one can identify the bifurcation points you can be in a better position to predict these sudden changes. This idea that bifurcation points do follow a pattern, offers opportunities within an organisation to be able to identify these changes or catalyst for change before they occur, allowing for a degree of predictability.

From an organisational perspective, managers at various levels in an organisation can manage or as the researcher suggests, maintain complexity and change towards organisational success. In a paper presented by Theodoridis (2009:100-104), the author presents an alternative view on how managers within an organisation deal with the complexity and when decisions need to be made or otherwise known as the bifurcation point. The author presents three views: *complexity reduction*, *complexity absorbing* and *complexity adapting*.

Drawing focus from the objectives of the study, Table (2.2) below presents the key definitions of these three views from an information flow and communications perspective:

COMPLEXITY REDUCTION	The organisation or managers attempt to reduce the amount of information as well as choices available to employees. This process is centred around control, inflexible structures and attempts to minimize connections and ultimately the flow of communication and information (Theodoridis 2009:101).
COMPLEXITY ABSORPTION	Focus is on understanding the process rather than the actual event that caused the change. This process by management sees the acknowledgement of the information available within an organisation but there is more focus on context and “flow” as opposed to just the “event” itself (Zhang, 2017:4-5).
COMPLEXITY ADAPTION	Managers and employees using adaptive processes gather information from around them, both internally and externally, as well as their own behaviour and used this information to adapt or “co-evolve” with the system or organisation (Theodoridis 2009:288).

Table 2.2 – The three views of complexity from an information and communications flow perspective - adapted from Theodoridis (2009)

Applied to the principles of bifurcation, management responses to complexity are somewhat different. Managers that apply an *absorption* view to changes tend to not see a need for action as they feel that those planned strategies implemented by the organisation would suffice. However, according to Theodoridis (2009:18) managers with an *adaptation* view sees changes or bifurcation points as an opportunity to evolve and grow. The outcomes of the authors research revealed the following:

We recognised in our research that when a complexity absorbing and a complexity adaptive retail organisation were at the same bifurcation point, the first one saw it as a planned moment in time while the other one perceived it as an emergent opportunity. They both acknowledged that action was required (development of a new store in an under-developed location), and both indicated that they were going to act similarly but the justification of their action was based on different arguments.

Regardless of the complexity view (*reduction, absorption or adaptation*) what is a common determinant in the change process is the amount of information available and the amount of control on a system during change. Parker and Stacey (1994:49-51) agree and state that managers are essential in the decision-making process during change and guide the process during system changes and bifurcations points. This further iterates the important role managers play during change and how different views on dealing with complexity have an impact on managing emergent changes, especially from a communications and flow of information point of view.

The Figure below (2.2) presented by Sundarasaradula and Hasan (2005:141) illustrates the ability of a system to manage complexity and change. Bifurcation is often seen as a negative or counterproductive feature of a system; in that it could mean more changes and more problems. However, for a system to achieve spontaneous order amidst chaos or to self-organize, it needs to go through changes. Bifurcation facilitates systems change towards more radical, complex changes and thus a higher degree of sophistication to have more capabilities to deal with change.

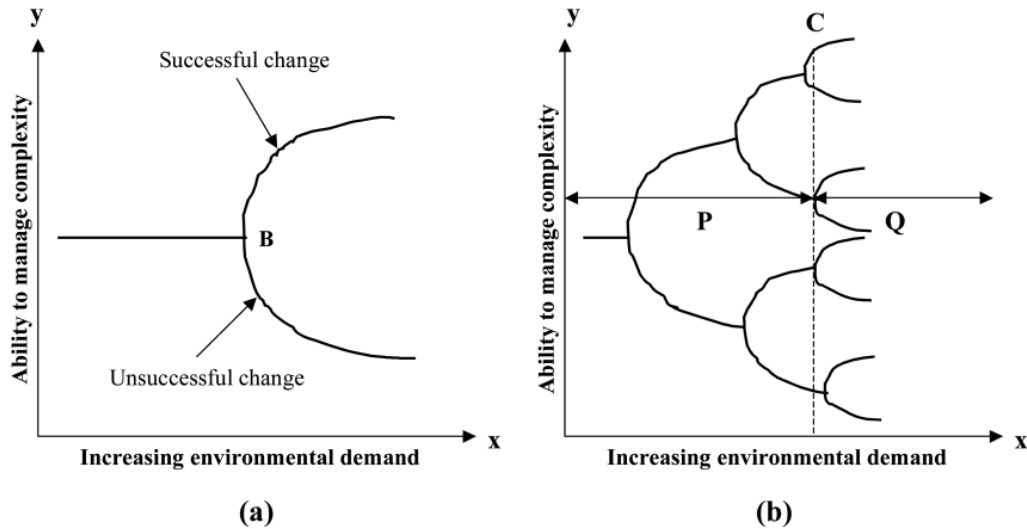


Figure 2.2 – Bifurcation and the ability of a system to manage complexity (Sundarasaradula and Hasan, 2005:141)

The (y) axis on both figures (a) and (b) represents the ability of a system to manage complexity and axis (x) represents the increasing demands on a system. Figure 2.2 (a) represents a simplistic view of change in an organisation. When change becomes too chaotic and bifurcation occurs (B in Figure 2.2 – a) the system starts the process of moving towards more sophisticated changes. P in Figure 2.2 (b) represents the level of entropy¹ build up after the initial change. Area (C) and (Q) represents the chaotic zone where self-organisation² occurs. This pushes the system to a higher level of sophistication.

Even though the chaotic nature of a complex system seems unpredictable, the system still has boundaries in which it operates. These boundaries are referred to as *strange attractors*. The point of bifurcation or change is essentially guided by these boundaries or *strange attractors*. Elements which serve as control mechanisms for human behaviour and interaction, such as internal organisational communication and communication in

¹ Entropy is applied to the second law of thermodynamics, however, from a systems perspective, entropy is defined as the degree of disorder or uncertainty in a system BAILEY, K. D. 2006. Living systems theory and social entropy theory. *Systems Research & Behavioral Science*, 23, 291-291-300.

² Self-organisation is a unique concept or branch of the Chaos Theory and is defined as "the ability of a system to spontaneously arrange its components in a purposeful manner" IGI-GLOBAL. 2021. *Self-organization* [Online]. Available: <https://www.igi-global.com/dictionary/self-organization/26243> [Accessed].

general are essential for strange attractors to function as they require a substantial amount of energy and information for the attractor to provide the system with bounded instability.

c. (ii) Strange Attractors

Strange attractors originally were developed within the disciplines of mathematics, physics and meteorology. They were first introduced by Edward Lorenz and initially coined the “Lorenz attractor” and later called a strange attractor by David Ruelle and Floris Takens (McMillan, 1999:39). Although there are various attractors within the concept of systems, there is only one attractor that is present in chaotic systems and that is strange attractors. According to David (1996:253) an “attractor is a trajectory through the state of space of a system that represents the behaviour of a system in the absence of changes in its environment”. With chaotic systems being aperiodic and having a sensitivity to initial conditions, predication is almost impossible. However, managers can use strange attractors to better maintain an organisation during change and limit the amount of unpredictability.

To understand how strange attractors can be applied to management practices, one needs to understand the dynamics of strange attractors within the Chaos Theory. The Chaos Theory proposes that there is an underlying order in chaos. Keaten (1995:12) explains that every system has a unique boundary that gives the system structure and creates order. These boundaries are strange attractors and the motion of stretching and folding occurs within these boundaries. Stretching or divergence refers to movement away from a point of attraction. In direct contrast, folding or convergence refers to movement towards a point of attraction. These oscillations between stretching and folding within a system give a strange attractor its unique shape (Boeing, 2016:7). The following Figure (2.3) is an example of strange attractor which can be described as having an infinite number of oscillations created by the stretching and folding movement within its boundaries. According to McMillan (1999:39) “a strange attractor is a way of describing and visualizing in geometric form the behaviour of a dynamical system over a period of time.”

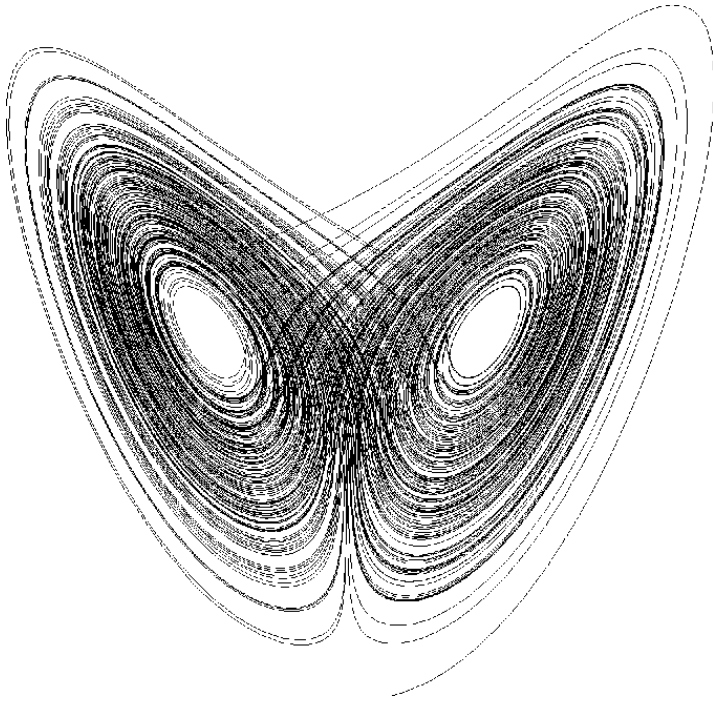


Figure 2.3 – A strange attractor with a fractal shape (Wilkinson, 1997:4)

Strange attractors are aperiodic, irregular in motion and never repeat because of the stretching and folding. Gleick (1987:140) states that “the chaotic attractor never intersects itself” and therefore, the impact of sensitive to initial conditions is seen. Input, therefore, evolves into a completely different output, like the principle of the butterfly effect. This geometric visualization represents behaviour over time. It represents that no matter how chaotic a system can get, a strange attractor will always pull the system into some sort of order or pattern. Furthermore, no matter how many diverging or converging motions occur, the motions will remain within the strange attractor boundaries. From an organisational point of view, no matter how chaotic emergent change can be, there will still be some sort of underlying order or pattern that one can observe and from these changes new behaviour emerges or new way of doing things. Traditionally, strange attractors within an organisation can be considered the organisations mission, vision, strategy, values and drivers (Klagge, 2016:4).

Organisations develop corporate identity and corporate culture programmes to organize and control employee behaviour. To a certain extent this is needed. An organisation’s core values are their strange attractors and according to Thiétart and Forgues (1995:231),

are identifying configurations that an organisation and its employees are “attracted” to in a state of chaos. However, Flower (1993:48-53) believes that a company should not try to control employees’ behaviours through policies, procedures and strategic corporate programmes but instead allow people to organise their own behaviour. Gilstrap (2005:55-69) agrees and states that when organisations dictate to their employees what the vision or corporate identity is that it has an adverse effect on the impact strange attractors have in maintaining a system.

This type of view further adds to the paradox of managers attempting to control an organisation or control the information flow to reduce the amount of change. Strange attractors need to have shared meaning, according to Gilstrap (2005:57), where there is more of a need for a frame of reference, versus prescribed policies and organisational values that are developed in isolation. It is the responsibility of managers to create an environment that allows for maintaining emergent change within an organisation. In effect, managers need to develop and facilitate processes that allow strange attractors to have shared meaning and shared meaning is thus created in a group or team setting at the local level.

Strange attractors are aperiodic and therefore do not occur at regular intervals. Although the literature presents that a form of strange attractors is an organisations vision, mission and corporate culture, the researcher offers an alternative view. deJong and deBoer (2003:3) state that strange attractors are aperiodic as well as driven by local interactions. It is the view of the researcher, therefore, that it would be almost impossible to just use an organisations vision, mission and corporate culture as a resource or strange attractor to manage emergent change. An organisations’ corporate culture is a prescribed and planned set of ideas that employees are encouraged to internalize. The fact that they are predetermined and planned suggests that they are inflexible. Change is constant in dynamic systems such as organisations and therefore for a strange attractor to function, it needs to be flexible enough to adapt to emergent changes. Gilstrap (2005:57) agrees and states that an organisations’ vision and mission used as a strange attractor cannot be mandated or dictated to staff but it must emerge from experiences of the people working in the organisation. Throughout the presented literature, this process driven view

is just as important as the system itself. Equally, there is a view that an organisation needs to not only be seen as a system but the non-linear interactions of its different subsystems are critical in understanding patterns of change.

d. (iii) Non-Linearity, Scale And Holism

Looking at a system as a whole while focusing on the connections of its parts is what allows one to identify patterns of change within a system. These systems are interdependent and the focus is on the connections and relationships between these different parts from a view of scale or different levels. Although systems are highly complex, according to Thiétart and Forgues (1995:27) “we can observe that this complexity is also organized and that, generally, it reproduces at a smaller scale what is observed at a more global level”. These smaller scale reproductions are referred to as fractals as mentioned above (ii). The understanding of fractals and self-similarity from a Chaos Theory perspective suggests that we should not look at a problem and break it down into smaller pieces to try understand it but rather look for patterns. Even when systems are going through chaos, there is a self-similarity in the changes, where these small changes will resemble the pattern of large changes.

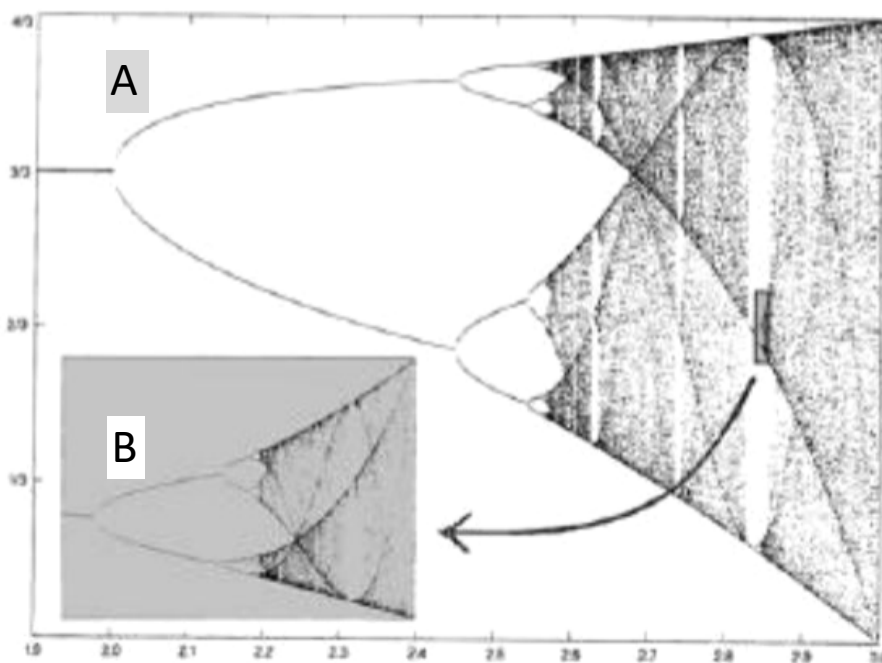


Figure 2.4 - Self-similarity across scale (Tiplady, 2003:4)

This is seen in the process of bifurcation (Figure 2.4). If you look at the complete Figure (A) you can see a visible pattern. When you look deeper into the doubling point, you can see this pattern and self-similarity where the pattern of the large-scale structure (A) is repeated (B). Furthermore, you can see from the diagram that the pattern will keep repeating. This holds profound context for managers, that if this sensitivity to initial conditions is not identified early on (doubling point or bifurcation point), the pattern will just keep repeating, getting more and more complex and harder to identify. The pattern at macro level is the same pattern at micro level (Tiplady 2003:4).

What is important to note from this visual representation of patterns, is that they 'seem' random but when looked closely reveal a pattern. Tiplady (2003:4-5) presents the view that when looking at an organisations behaviour that similar patterns exist at a smaller scale or within lower levels. It is the researcher's interpretation that in effect, lower levels of employees will always reveal the patterns and information that is needed for managers to make decisions that will maintain the system during emergent change. Managers often do not look at changes from a "scale" perspective or from a common term "can't see the wood from the trees".

Looking at a system from a scale perspective, emphasizes that importance and impact of the process of change. Meadows (1982:23) presents a critical view in light of this perspective and states: "You think because you understand *one* you must understand *two*, because one and one makes two. But you must also understand *and*". The "*and*" refers to the process of change. From a practical point of view, it suggests that changes in a system are not merely because of a cause-and-effect relationship. The system needs to be looked at holistically and not broken down into isolated, fragmented parts.

e. (iv) Fragmentation and Interdependence

Fragmentation in a system is the attempt to break down the whole into smaller parts to analyze the behaviour in a system. However, because a dynamic system is

interdependent, the process of fragmentation has a detrimental effect on understanding the system as a whole. Wheatley (1994:17) believes that for centuries we have been illusioned that we can attempt to “separate and fragment” everything to understand it. He continues to say that thinking holistically remains uncharted territory, a territory that needs to be explored. This holds significance with understanding how organisations function and the constant need for managers to try exerting control to contain chaos or problems. According to Ströh and Jaatinen (2002:148-165), if there is strict differentiation between the different roles and functions within an organization, that can cause fragmentation. It is a common assumption that more hierarchy within an organisation means more structure and subsequently, more control. As the literature has presented, more control, especially by management, is counterproductive in a dynamic system and in dealing with emergent changes.

In effect, it is somewhat of a paradox that the more hierarchy and structure there is in an organization, the more fragmentation there is, according to the Chaos Theory. There are consequences to a high-level fragmentation within an organisation. According to Bach (2017:1) organisations that have a high level of hierarchy and thus fragmentation are what the author refers to as “hierarchy-related implications” when it comes to the way management communicate information to their staff, especially when it comes to communicating strategy discussed at high level management. The top-down flow of information is often misinterpreted by managers in their departments and senior management do not get a true reflection of what is happening on the ground. The same goes for information bottom-up – it is equally fragmented and often lacking in detail due to the interpretation of the information by that manager communicating the information top-down.

Moving away from a polarized view of systems means a complete paradigm shift in the way we see the concept of interdependence. Classical thinking, including the Chaos Theory, emphasises the importance of so-called independent variables. However, the researcher would like to offer an alternate view within the concept of the Chaos Theory and the principles that govern certain independent variables. Gharajedaghi (2011a:25-27) explains how biological and social sciences have opted for an analytical approach to

viewing independent variables, which in his view, has “conveniently ignored” what he refers to as emergent properties such as success and happiness. In the case of this study, these emergent properties would be the impact of culture on communication. According to the researchers’ view, these independent variables are not actually independent and therefore, cannot be viewed in such an analytical way. Kayuni and Tambulasi (2011:800-810) agree and state that when systems are self-organising, then the bifurcations are characterised by moments of choice.

f. (v) Self-Organisation

Self-organisation is a unique concept or branch of the Chaos Theory and is defined as “the ability of a system to spontaneously arrange its components in a purposeful manner” (IGI-Global, 2021:1). Self-organisation is also referred to as *emergence* within a system and is inherent within a system. The whole foundation of the Chaos Theory is the importance of change within a system. Lartey (2020:46) states that “self-organisation can occur only after a change in the system”. Change is therefore necessary in the creation of new forms and becomes more adaptive the more self-organized the system is. However, self-organisation is by nature spontaneous and therefore cannot be controlled. Managers are often faced with the dilemma in that they feel the need to control but at the same time allow for self-organisation in which culture and communication play an important role. According to Ortegon-Monroy (2003:390) and Cheprasov (2021) “control is an illusion” and managers’ attempt to influence and control the learning process for employees to achieve stability. Order and freedom are viewed as counterparts that work against each other. Wheatley (1994:95) agrees and states that the concept of the Chaos Theory is a paradox, where freedom and order are not two forces working against each other but are in fact “partners in generating viable, well-ordered, autonomous systems” and achieving general global stability.

Stability over time is one of the characteristics of a self-organising system. Wheatley (1994:95-101) explains that this stability of a system is referred to as global stable structures. From the point of view of an organisation, the global structure is the organisation, which is further made up of local levels or different departments. When

change happens in these global structures at various local levels, the total system remains stable. However, there are still changes occurring at these local levels and according to Wheatley (1994:94) there is nothing preventing these small constant changes. Managers need to tolerate these changes and allow for the various levels of autonomy within the departments that make up the organisation. This further emphasizes that managers will not be able to manage emergent change if they attempt to control this process and with self-organisation only occurring during change, change is therefore an important part of the process. Autonomy within different departments cannot not be achieved through management control and control with regards to strategy. Freedom and order are not seen as black and white and opposing concepts but are seen as an important element in managing systems towards the “*edge of chaos*” and maintaining emergent change.

Jantsch (1980) states that “the more freedom in self-organisation, the more order”, therefore, reinforcing the need for autonomy in an organisation to achieve self-organisation. Autonomy from an individual point of view is largely driven by the rules, policies and pre-determined “way of doing things” within an organisation. Often organisations have a prescribed Code of Conduct when it comes to communication within the organisation. This could determine how and when employees communicate with their managers, which could limit the amount of autonomy employees have in sharing information. For self-organisation to be achieved, Wheatley (1994:95) states that a “system must support the independent activity of its members...when it does this, the global system achieves even greater levels of autonomy and integrity.” Because self-organisation is driven by and is a result of change, this continuous process lends to the view that a system is never stable but rather resilient to change. This resilience allows for the system to be flexible to changes and could create structures that emerge spontaneously depending on the needs of the systems and what is required in that moment. Wheatley (1994:95) explains that self-organising systems move more towards resiliency than stability and that the flow of information and how this information is communicated determines the extent to which this can be achieved. This places importance on the role of communication in achieving an organisations resilience to change.

Management control and control of the flow of information limits the system's ability to organise that information to suit its needs. According to Flower (1993:51), "the science of self-organising systems says that if you want order, you need a free flow of information because information is what living systems use to transform themselves". As mentioned earlier in this section, self-organisation cannot be achieved through control by management or by policies and structures. Communication forms an integral part of the process of self-organisation both in a positive and negative way. Vertical, top-down communication that is often used by organisational management to control a system does not provide the ideal environment for autonomy and therefore, hinders self-organisation. According to Peppers (2014:para. 2) bottom-up communication allows for employees to use their own initiative when dealing with changes within the organisations at the local level. With so many changes, especially emergent changes happening at local levels in an organisation, it is almost impossible for a manager to keep track of the changes and even more so impossible to exert control over these changes at this level.

Peppers (2014:para. 6-8) proposes that for an organisation to achieve self-organisation, the following processes need to be implemented by management:

- *Autonomy* – employees need to work collaboratively to achieve autonomy. Bottom-up communication allows for a greater degree of autonomy as well as in the view of the researcher, allows for information to be more relevant and an accurate reflection of what is happening "on the ground". When managers control the flow of communication, communication is one-sided and based heavily on the influence and beliefs of the manager in question.
- *Engagement* – employees need to feel engaged to self-organise and top-down communication and control hinders this process. Gavaza (2020:para. 1- 3) adds that engaged employees feel connected to the organisation and in turn leads to passion and innovation.
- *Empowerment* – organisations not only need to ensure that employees have access to resources and tools but from the perspective of the research, have access to information and that the information flow is not distorted and is

symmetrical. Managers cannot empower staff when information is top-down and controlled.

Adding to this, Wheatley (1994:147) introduces the concept of “self-reference” as an equally important process in self-organising systems that acts as a reference point. Geyer (2001:145) further defines self-reference as being “typical of human beings on an individual and group level...where (individual or social) system collects information about its own functioning, which in turn can influence that functioning”. Self-reference includes the values and traditions that employees have and facilitates an orderly process of change when the system is turbulent. However, self-reference can be affected by the level of control a manager has and the amount of autonomy staff are given. Self-organisation and therefore, self-reference increases the resilience of a system to change and if managers attempt to control this process by controlling the flow of information it will automatically reduce the efficiency of how emergent change is dealt with. Essentially, feedback is one of the drivers in the ability of an employee to be able to self-reference. According to Hamilton (2006:3), feedback from all directions is important for employees to self-organise and a feedback loop connects individuals in a microworld and connects the cause to the effect. In principle, feedback links individuals and groups and is essentially for learning and adapting. Capra (1996:85) agrees and states “...self-organisation is the spontaneous emergence of new structures and new forms of behaviour in open systems far from equilibrium, characterized by internal feedback loops”. Because self-organisation occurs because of local interactions, standards, regulations and company culture that is driven from top-down is unable to sustain self-organisation in a complex system such as an organisation. Galacgac and Singh (2015:4) agree and equally offers the view that rigid rules and guidelines do not allow for flexibility and therefore, make maintaining emergent change impossible.

With the importance of self-organisation in managing emergent change being established above, self-organisation has additional benefits within an organization, especially with regards to encouraging innovation, new forms of behaviour and coordination as well as creativity in collective behaviour. Understanding the collective action of people in a work environment can be better understood with the discussion of *Stigmergy*. Stigmergy is "an

ingredient of self-organisation [that] mediates interactions among workers” (Camazine *et al.*, 2001:58). From the position of this study, Stigmergy as an offset of self-organisation within the Chaos Theory not only increases innovation and creativity but has the characteristics that make a system efficiently respond to emergent change. To present the opportunities that self-organisation and Stigmergy can offer dynamic organisations, the researcher will define the concept.

Marsh and Onof (2008:136) state that “stigmergy is the phenomenon of indirect communication mediated by modifications of the environment”. Heylighen (2015:1) adds to this definition and defines Stigmergy as “a mechanism of indirect coordination... enables complex, coordinated activity without any need for planning, control, communication, simultaneous presence or even mutual awareness”. With inspiration from the natural environment, Zoologist, Grassé addressed the paradox of coordination by studying termite colonies in 1959. The study addresses the coordination paradox of how individual behaviour reconciles with behaviour at a global level or in the case of this research, behaviour within the organisation. Although Stigmergy was initially established within the study of entomology and more recently around Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and software development, Stigmergy is developing as a new paradigm of thinking within business, especially in diverse teams. Bonabeau and Meyer (2001a:106-114) are of the view that from a business perspective there is so much to learn from ants, termites and other social insects. The authors’ research over the past 20 years of studying social insects revealed three significant characteristics: flexibility; robustness; and self-organisation. As presented in the literature, self-organisation is still a challenge with most managers, where they feel that when a department or organisation is out of control more control needs to be applied.

However, according to Bonabeau and Meyer (2001:107), the ability to adapt to the environment (flexibility) and to continue to function if one group member fails (robustness) is essentially a result of self-organisation. This suggests that self-organisation is the prerequisite for flexibility and robustness, especially within dynamic modern environments. Being able to adapt to emergent changes determines the success of an organisation and additionally, facilitates the process of understanding the connection

between the individual and the group and thereby, collective behaviour. Khaddaj *et al.* (2016:24) states that “Stigmergy offers a framework to understand coordination. This phenomenon explains self-organisation at the level of societies. It mediates and regulates collective activities”. Essentially, Stigmergy explains understanding the mechanisms in collective activities that result in regulation and emergence.

The collective behaviour that is a result of Stigmergy is referred to as “swarm intelligence”. According to Bonabeau and Meyer (2001b:1) “the most powerful insights from swarm intelligence is that complex collective behaviour can emerge from individuals following simple rules”. From an organisational perspective, this suggests that if organisations or managers should replace strict, command-control structures, policies and procedures with “simple” rules it would in turn create an environment for Stigmergy to occur and therefore, swarm intelligence that results in a greater level of innovation and coordination. Becker (2019) proposes that there are certain prerequisites for Stigmergy and swarm intelligence to occur and these include: the free flow of information; and managers that take on a role of facilitation. Gloor and Cooper (2007:1)) agree and equally propose two principles that encourage swarm intelligence: “gain power by giving away power”; and “share with the swarm.”

Like self-organisation as presented by Peppers (2014:para. 2) earlier, focus on both self-organisation and Stigmergy relies on the free flow of information, communication and autonomy that guides the level of empowerment. Control is a significant hindering factor in both self-organisation and Stigmergy and complex behaviour and innovation and coordination in the case of Stigmergy, occurs from simple rules. The researcher proposes the Chaos Theory and self-organisation as possible “simple rules” to guide Stigmergy and achieve swarm intelligence. This in turn is guided by *glocally* influenced, symmetrical internal organisational communication. The specific organisational structure and cultural impact and benefit of Stigmergy and swarm intelligence in managing emergent change with internal organisational communication will be discussed in detail in Section 3.2.2.9 (ii). A balance between order and chaos is necessary to achieve maximum adaptability in a system and with change being a prerequisite for self-organisation, this dynamic balance aims at maintaining emergent change or as the Chaos Theory refers, the “*edge of chaos*”.

According to Ramos *et al.* (2005:5) swarm intelligence is achieved during phase transition, which in the Chaos Theory terms is essentially the edge of chaos, where the “richest, most complex behaviour” emerges.

g. (vi) Edge of Chaos

The Chaos Theory postulates that if a system is too chaotic it becomes unrecognizable, unmanageable and ultimately falls apart and cannot achieve its goals. However, if a system is too stable, it loses its competitive edge and has no capacity for innovation, creativity and the ability to renew itself. Langosco (2012:1) explains that “the most efficient status is, therefore, when there is just enough structure to permit some order, but without reducing flexibility and innovation”. Within the Chaos Theory, this state is referred to as the “edge of chaos” where new behaviour emerges from changes within the system. Lewin (1994) is quoted in Hudson (2000:224) and defines the edge of chaos as the “transition between order and chaos...that buys you exquisite control”. This definition presents two important features of the edge of chaos from a systems perspective. Firstly, that the edge of chaos is a “transition” which is defined in the Collins Dictionary as “the *process* or a period of changing from one state or condition to another” (Dictionary, 2023:para. 1). This means that the edge of chaos is not a static state. You do not arrive at the edge of chaos and stay there – it is a dynamic process that requires energy or action to remain at this state. From an organisational perspective, this energy or action is in the form of communication. As discussed in the previous section (self-organisation), where Flower (1993:51) discusses the importance of information and thus communication as being critical in self-organising systems and states that “...if you want order, you need a free flow of information, because information is what living systems use to transform themselves”. The definition of the word transition as offered earlier refers to a transition as a “*process*”. This implies that to remain at the edge of chaos from an organisational perspective, that communication needs to be seen as a process or constant exchange of information. This includes the management of information in response to change. Subsequently, adding to the view of the researcher that internal communication needs to be a process and not a model that is inflexible to emergent changes within an organisation.

The second point that is highlighted in the definition offered by Hudson (2000:224) is that the edge of chaos “buys you exquisite control”. In analyzing what the author meant by “exquisite control”, the word needs to be defined to add meaning. Exquisite is defined as “finely done or made” and “very sensitive or fine” (Britannica, 2024:para. 1). This adds meaning to Hudson’s definition that the edge of chaos “buys you exquisite control” in that the control with this regard is sensitive. This implies that control in terms of managing emergent change is not control as we know it but rather maintained that it requires constant adjusting and driven by a *process* of communication and information. Langosco (2012) agrees with this view and states that a system does not just automatically remain at the edge of chaos, it takes effort and energy to keep it there. Internal organisational communication has a vital role driven by managers in maintaining the organisation at the edge of chaos. It falls on leaders or managers to maintain their department or organisation at the edge of chaos and therefore, the flow of information and internal organisational communication becomes critical in achieving this. According to Khanyile (2017:209) complex systems “require agile leaders who adopt various leadership styles in different situations, appreciate complexity and embrace change”.

This section of literature has presented the six principles of the Chaos Theory as well as framing the literature in the context of its practical application to emergent change and communication perspective within the organisation. The following section will present the theoretical underpinnings of systems thinking that will subsequently inform the conceptual framework in Chapter 3.

2.2.3 Theoretical Fundamentals of Systems Thinking

Organisations are becoming increasingly complex and leaders and managers are trying even harder to understand these complex, dynamic systems. However, it is one thing to be able to understand and acknowledge the complexity and dynamic nature of these systems, but one needs to be able to manage the process of change efficiently. Systems Thinking is the application of system theories, such as the Chaos Theory. According to McNamara (2006:405), system theories assist in understanding how organisations work and “the application of this theory is called systems analysis” – Systems Thinking is a tool

for systems analysis. Various authors (Stevenson, 2018:163, McNamara, 2006:405, Mele et al., 2010:126) when defining Systems Thinking, make specific reference to the term “application” of systems theories. The term “application” is defined “as the act of putting something to use”. This further suggests that Systems Thinking is a tool for the practical application of system theories, such as the Chaos Theory. The difference between Systems Thinking and Systems Theories, such as the Chaos Theory, is that Systems Thinking is the skill or ability to solve problems within complex systems, whereas System Theory is the transdisciplinary study of systems.

With the rapid development of technology and globalization that impacts the complexity of social systems, we are increasingly becoming more interconnected and thus, developing now more than ever, more complex systems that are highly interrelated. Arnold and Wade (2015:690) suggest that due to the increasingly complex world we live in, that *Systems Thinking* offers a solution to better understand the “deep roots” of complex behaviours and therefore, allowing you to better approach complex problems through enhanced predication and adjustment of outcomes. Both Systems Thinking and the Chaos Theory add importance to the study, as these theories offer a contemporary view of managing emergent change in modern, dynamic workplaces. One of the critical links between Systems Thinking and the Chaos Theory is that both schools of thought recognize the importance and impact small changes have on a system. With the focus of the study being on emergent, unplanned changes, Senge (1990:49) confirms that “Systems Thinking also shows that small, well-focused actions can sometimes produce significant, enduring improvements”.

The system’s approach views change as a symptom of the problem and not necessarily the cause. This approach offers organisations a way of seeing a specific change as a symptom of a much larger problem and proposes that you cannot solve a problem if you do not understand the cause. Senge (1990:68) views Systems Thinking as a framework for managing change and moves away from seeing changes as “static snapshots” but rather seeing patterns from interrelationships within the system. These patterns are essentially driven by communication and interaction at the local level. Conventional thinking with regards to how parts are related to the whole and more specifically how

different variables can affect a business has been largely based on analytical thinking. According to Gharajedaghi (2011b:16) this analytical approach has been in place for over 400 years and includes a systematic three step process. Taking a part in what it wants to study; attempts to explain the parts separately; and finally tries to “aggregate the understanding of the parts into the explanation of the whole”.

Systems Thinking follows a completely different process and therefore, leads to questioning the extent to which certain variables in a system or in an organisation are in fact “interdependent”. Gharajedaghi (2011:6) emphasize that Systems Thinking has already gone through three distinct generations of change. The initial generation, characterized by operations research was mostly concerned with solving discrete problems in deterministic systems. The second generation, represented by Open Systems and Cybernetics, broadened the discussion to include self-organization and interdependency, particularly in living systems. Systems thinking faces the triple challenge of interdependency, self-organization and choice within the complex landscape of socio-cultural systems as we enter the third generation, symbolised by design thinking. This sophisticated evolution illustrates how theory has been applied in several generations of systems thinking to address ever more complex concepts.

The third generation of thinking includes the concept of choice within modern, socio-cultural systems. It assumes that change cannot be seen from a simple “black and white” point of view. Traditional views of thinking views change as having a simple cause-and-effect nature that can be controlled or strategically planned for. Gharajedaghi (2011:7) states that removing the cause does not mean you can remove the effect. This polarised view tends to analyse individual factors in isolation and does not see the possible interrelationships of these changes within a holistic, dynamic view. For example, within the polarized view of change from a Systems Thinking perspective, a strike is seen as the problem but little investigation is done into the cause of the problem. Efforts are being made to try fix the problem as soon as possible to avoid operational delays and costs. This process then fails to address the interrelationships within this change process, the flow of communication and subsequent interaction and therefore, never addresses the cause of the problem. This could then lead to an imminent repeat of the same problem.

Seeing patterns as they unfold and in viewing an organisation holistically, Systems Thinking moves away from viewing this obvious cause-and-effect nature of systems. Within the notion of seeing change as it unfolds, change is therefore seen as emergent and on-going. Montuori (2000:62) makes specific reference to these “changes as they unfold” and further reiterates the significance of Systems Thinking within the concepts of change as essential for interdependent, dynamic and modern organisations. In addition, these modern systems have emergent properties that are completely unexpected and “arise from collaborative functioning of a system” (Mercer, 2018:1). These collaborative functions include communication amongst the interdependent variables and the emergent interaction that is a result thereof.

This underpins the whole concept of Systems Thinking, that systems or organisations need to be viewed from a broad perspective and a view that specifically focuses on interactions between the systems and not just breaking up the whole into smaller parts as in reductionism. Dawidowicz (2012) as cited in Kogetsidis (2012:190) explains “the importance of the parts is usually easily recognized in any system, simple or complex. The significance of the interactions between the parts, on the other hand, is not always recognized as being important”. Often attempts are made by management to develop strategic plans to try to manage the system in response to interactions in the system and its parts. This includes communication policies and norms that are informed by strategic processes and procedures. However, internal changes within modern organisations and systems are emergent and have emergent properties as described by Mercer (2018:1). These changes that are often driven by social interactions are unexpected, cannot be predicted and often chaotic in nature. Therefore, strategic planning and attempting to “manage” a system’s emergent properties with long-term strategy could be ineffective. Bamford and Forrester (2003:546) agrees and state:

Organisational change is seen to be less dependent on detailed plans and projections than on reaching an actual understanding of the complexity of the issues involved and identifying the range of possible options...He emphasises that, in today's business environment, one-dimensional change interventions are likely to

generate only short-term results and heighten instability rather than reduce it.

Systems Thinking through a Chaos Theory lens shifts the focus of managing emergent change from a strategic, single role to rather managing emergent change by managing interaction facilitated by internal organisational communication. Moreover, using information, communication, culture and creating a learning organisation to facilitate this interaction. With interaction in a system driving change and integration itself being a dynamic process driven by communication, a simple “one-shoe-fits-all” or one strategy across departments and functions is not effective in complex, dynamic organisations. From the perspective of Systems Thinking, the concept of plurality is central to systems and is the equivalent of interdependency in the Chaos Theory. According to Gharajedaghi (2011:43) plurality means that “systems can have multiple structures and multiple functions and be governed by multiple processes” - it denies the classical view of a single structure with a single function in a single cause-and-effect relationship. When several variables are at play and straightforward cause-and-effect correlations may not be sufficient to explain a system's behaviour, Systems Thinking can be especially helpful. It aids in developing a more thorough understanding of how a system functions by assisting in the identification of patterns, feedback loops and interdependencies within the system. Stroh (2015) presents a view on Systems Thinking from the perspective “why good intentions are not enough”. Social systems are complex by nature and with social systems being specially designed to achieve a purpose, conventional thinking is limited. Lewis Thomas, an award-winning physician and researcher is quoted in Stroh (2015:27) says, “If you want to fix something you are first obliged to understand . . . the whole system”.

Systems Thinking is a method of problem-solving and decision-making that places an emphasis on knowing how the many parts of a system work together rather than seeing them separately. It entails taking the system into account as a whole rather than merely its component pieces and realizing that modifications to one system component might have significant implications on other system components. From an organisational perspective, an organisation has a purpose and objective that is driven by strategies and

the employees who make up the social system within this organisation aim to achieve these collectively. Kim *et al.* (2014:7), suggests that there is often an incongruity between senior management intended strategies versus what was realised due to the gap between these managers and lower-level employees of an organisation. From a Systems Thinking view, each system or department, although interdependent, all work towards the organisational goals. Furthermore, their impact from a Systems Thinking perspective is two-fold – first, how they impact each other and second, how they impact the whole. Bamford and Forrester (2003:547), as cited in Pettigrew and Whipp (1993), believe that to manage emergent change, you must involve “linking action by people at all business levels”. Internal organisational communication is the binding and “linking action” that is needed to link it all together.

Systems Thinking in practice uses a variety of tools and approaches, including scenario planning, causal loop diagrams and systems mapping. Individuals and organisations can better understand the underlying dynamics of a system, find potential leverage points for intervention or change and create more effective solutions that consider the complexity of the system as a whole by applying Systems Thinking to a problem or situation. Systems Thinking has four foundations; namely: Holistic Thinking; Operational Thinking; Design Thinking and Sociocultural Model.

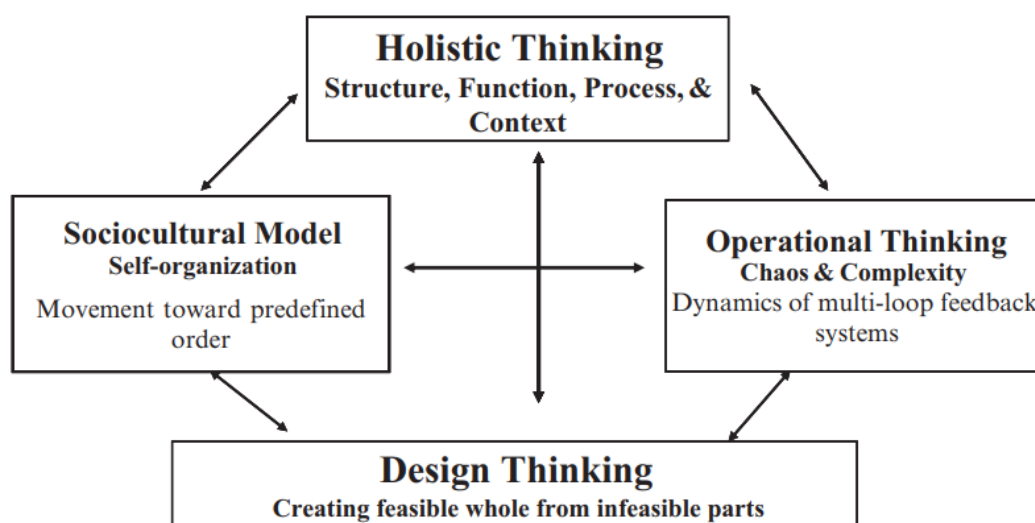


Figure 2.5 – Foundation of Systems Thinking Methodology (Gharajedaghi, 2011:23)

2.2.3.1 Holistic Thinking

Holistic thinking focuses on the whole but in order to understand the whole you need to understand a system or organisations structure, function and processes within context. Furthermore, the approach requires the linking of parts that make up the whole. Skarzauskiene (2010:52) states that “the basis of every successful system is a successful communication between its parts”. These parts are influenced by organisational capacities such as structure and processes. According to the author, Gharajedaghi (2011b:89) holistic thinking is both practical and theoretical, with structure, function and process forming central notions in holistic thinking. These notions are discussed in further details from a practical application point of view:

- **Structure** - emphasises the critical importance of comprehending and planning a system's structure since it has a direct impact on the system's behaviour, potential and adaptability. The relevance of understanding the structure allows for the identification of the connections, dependencies and patterns that govern how the system functions (Gharajedaghi, 2011b:23, Ackoff and Emery, 1972).
- **Function** - Function is the term used to describe the functions and responsibilities carried out by system components. Gharajedaghi (2011b:89-91) emphasises the importance of comprehending the roles played by each component in order to fully understand the system's overall behaviour and intended function. Determining how each component contributes to attaining the system's goals can be done by identifying and evaluating functions. It enables the functions to be in line with the goals of the system and aids in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the system.
- **Process** - A system's process is the order in which various events, interactions or changes happen. Understanding how inputs are converted into outputs, how feedback loops affect the system and how the system adapts and changes is aided

by process analysis. These processes are usually determined by management and through various levels of control.

In conclusion, Gharajedaghi's focus on structure, function and process highlights the importance of these concepts to systems thinking. Understanding the structure enables efficient component design and organisation, while being aware of the function guarantees alignment with the goal of the system. Process analysis offers understanding of the dynamics, behaviour and evolution of the system, allowing for well-informed management of complex systems. The study and design of systems can be approached more holistically by integrating these components.

2.2.3.2 *Operational Thinking*

Operational Thinking is based on the principles of system dynamics and therefore, the evaluation of multi-loop feedback systems. Operational thinking requires looking at causality and how behaviour in social systems are generated (Richmond, 2018:para. 14). In other words, its concerned with mapping relationships and how systems do what they do. Operational thinking encompasses feedback loops and just like any type of feedback loop, including those within the basic concepts of communications, inform interactions and help regulate, control and influence behaviour. Understanding, identifying and analyzing these feedback loop patterns and behaviours assists in better predicting a systems behaviour.

2.2.3.3 *Design Thinking*

Design Thinking or interactive thinking, according to Skarzauskiene (2010:49-64) is both an art of trying to find differences where they are similarities and the science of finding similarities where there are differences. The process includes finding creative ways to identify challenges and find leverage points. According to Gharajedaghi (2011a:138) design thinking and design is an emergent outcome of a dynamic systems, its functions, structures and processes are all interactive in this process. Design thinking is essentially human- and user-centred. Understanding user or stakeholder demands, experiences and viewpoints is a key component of design thinking. This is in line with systems thinking

since it promotes a thorough comprehension of the numerous system stakeholders and their needs, allowing for the efficient creation of solutions. This furthermore aligns with those concepts of the Chaos Theory with creativity being key to self-organisation. Design thinking and systems thinking both place a strong emphasis on collaboration among multidisciplinary teams. Systems thinking aligns with design thinking's emphasis on collaboration to produce novel solutions and successfully address complex, interrelated difficulties by acknowledging the complexity of problems and the need for multiple viewpoints (Gharajedaghi, 2011b:24).

2.2.3.4 *Socio-cultural Model*

Socio-cultural model or self-organisation is one of the central ideas to the Chaos Theory and focusses on moving a system towards self-renewal that can spontaneously create new structures as a response to change. Skarzauskiene (2010:53) states that a system “cannot passively adapt to their environments but should co-evolve with them and be able to change the rules of interaction as they evolve over time“. According to Gharajedaghi (2011:64) culture within the concepts of Systems Thinking foundations is the “blueprint” and “operating system” of a living system. In the authors theory, culture includes societal and cultural perspectives such as shared beliefs, values, norms, behaviours and practices within a sociocultural system.

The interaction and application of these four foundations of Systems Thinking offers a solution to better predict changes in complex environments and thus develop the appropriate tools, such as internal communication practices and channels to better respond to emergent change. Gharajedaghi (2011a:24) agrees and states that these foundations “create a comprehensive methodology that can meet the challenges of the emerging chaotic and complex environment.” Systems thinking emphasises information flow, quality and quantity because it understands how important information is to decision-making, feedback loops and overall system adaptability. A system's behaviour and functionality are fundamentally shaped by information. Throughout this chapter, the importance of the flow of information is highlighted in both Systems Thinking and the Chaos Theory. The intricate workings of complex systems require a grasp of the role of communication and information in the domain of systems thinking and theories.

The next section will present the fundamental role that information and communication play within systems, offering a historical perspective on communication and its critical position in the larger context of systems. This thorough investigation acts as a preface, laying the groundwork for a more sophisticated comprehension of the internal organisational communication portion that follows.

2.2.4 Foundations of Communication in Systems Thinking

Understanding the complicated link between communication and systems thinking is essential to comprehending the dynamics of complex systems. Effective communication is an embodiment of the holistic viewpoint promoted by systems thinking, where it is essential to comprehend the larger context and relationships. Furthermore, because communication allows ideas and information to be shared, it facilitates the investigation of emergent features and self-organization within systems. Systems thinking places a strong emphasis on feedback mechanisms in the context of adaptive reactions to change, and communication is essential for both information sharing and action coordination. With the objectives of the study focusing on internal organizational communication, the researcher will provide the importance of the flow of information and communication as a basic human need as well as provide a concise overview of the historical evolution of communication presented through a system thinking view.

2.2.4.1 History and the Development of Communication

The history of communication has primitive and ancient origins, with the initiation of speech approximately 500,000 BCE. This later developed into the first form of written communication with the form of symbols painted in caves during the Ice Age around 130,000 BCE (Novac, 2019:para. 10). Thereafter, communication started to slowly develop from cave paintings to cuneiform, to eventually the development of the printing press in the 15th century which introduced mass communication. Thereafter, communication developed at a rapid pace with the introduction of the postal service in the 18th century and the beginning of telecommunications in the 19th century. From the 19th century on, communication developed exponentially, with the invention of the personal computer in

the mid 1970's. The development of mass communication and the obvious interest in understanding communication, brought about the development of communication models in an attempt to better understand communication from social setting. During the development of communication, scholars began to develop communication models to explain communication from a social process point of view. Adapted from Kuznar and Yagner (2020:10-21), the timeline below (Figure 2.6) presents the development of communication models and the most prominent scholars that developed them.

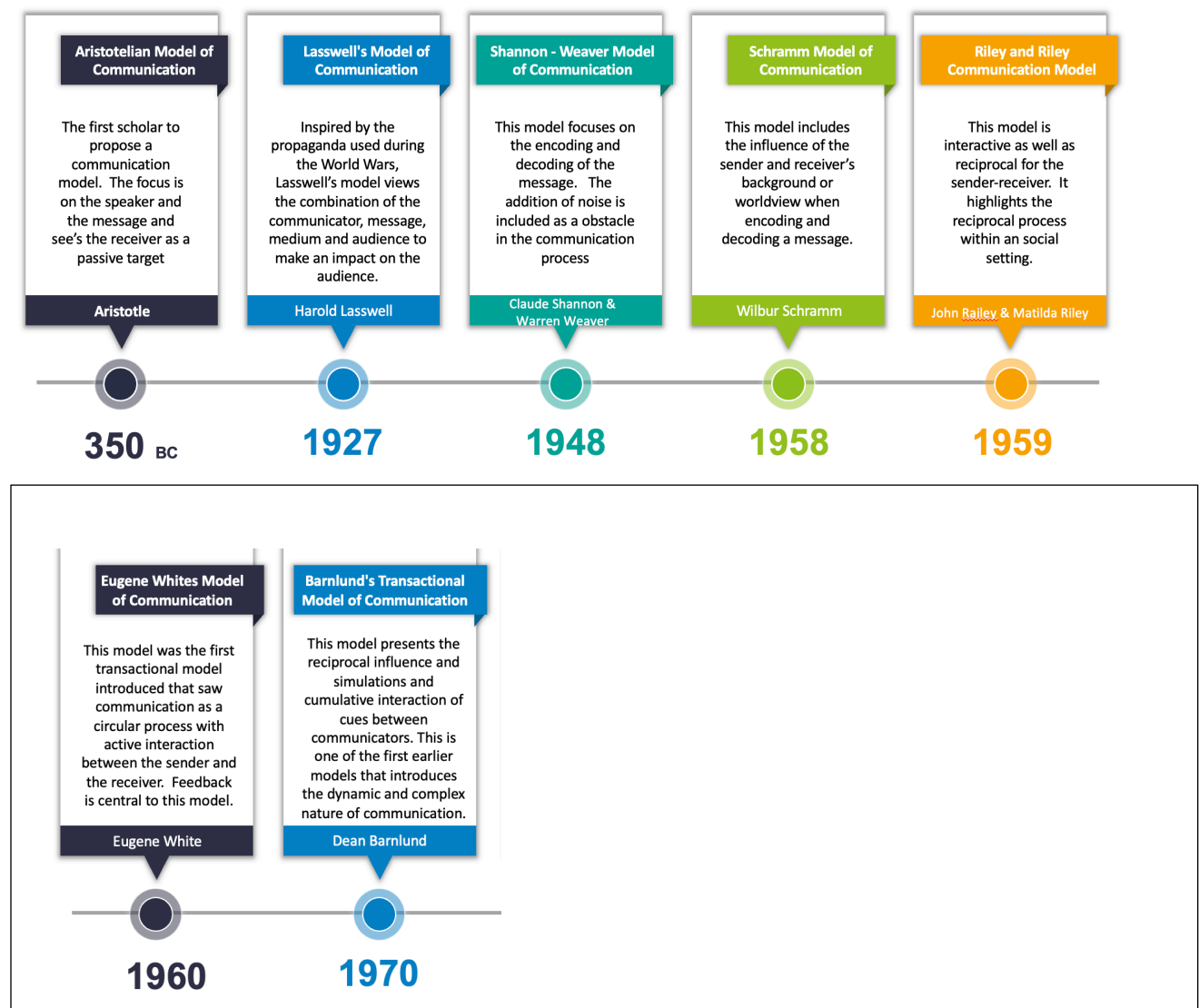


Figure 2.6 – Development of Communication and Communication Models (Kuznar and Yagner, 2020:10-21)

Earlier linear models of communication as developed by Aristotle (350 BC), Lasswell (1927), Shannon and Weaver (1948) and Schramm (1954) are simplistic and see the receiver as passive. The message could be sounds, words or behaviour but these models are one-way interaction where feedback is not present (Kobiruzzaman 2021). The interactive models were developed by Osgood and Schramm (1954) and Riley and Riley (1959) which saw the introduction of two-way communication. However, although these models introduce feedback, unlike linear models of communication, feedback is not simultaneous. According to Corey (2021:1), although the transactional models are more dynamic than linear models, it still however, has “limitations” in that even though you can be both the sender and the receiver, it cannot happen simultaneously. As communication models developed, transactional models were introduced that addressed the limitations of both the linear and transactional models of communication. Transactional models of communication, such as Barnlund (1970:189), not only proposed a two-way process but feedback was immediate. According to Kobiruzzaman (2021:1) feedback is “direct and fast.”

The common thread between the models of communication presented above is that information is a basic requirement for successful communication. Information with meaning, intent and relevance is fundamental before people may participate in the communication and transmission of messages. The following section will discuss the importance of the flow of information for communication to occur and within the same context discuss communication as a basic human need. Acknowledging communication as an essential human need allows us to recognise its pervasiveness and importance in a variety of contexts.

2.2.4.2 The Flow of Information and Communication as a Basic Human Need

From the standpoint of communication theory, information is a basic requirement for successful communication. The understanding that information acts as the substance or content of communication unites different theories of communication. Essentially, information serves as the fundamental component of communication and communication takes place as a result of the exchanging, interpreting and processing of this information.

This comprehension is consistent with the notion that communication is an intentional and dynamic process in which information is necessary to establish connections, generate shared understanding and enable the flow of important messages.

Communication is the cornerstone of our shared existence since it stems from the fundamental human desire for knowledge. We communicate with others because it is a fundamental human need to connect, share and exchange information, whether through spoken words, emails or nonverbal signs. As stated by UNESCO (2009:12-13), access to information is one of the basic human rights and information is an essential part of a nation's resources.

It is well acknowledged that the exchange of information is the initial stage of communication. During this preliminary phase, people share concepts, data or messages, laying the groundwork for a subsequent, more intricate communication interaction. Subsequently, communication involves deciphering and comprehending the message. From the standpoint of Chaos Theory and systems thinking, interactions and exchanges are necessary for live systems to thrive. Information that comes before communication provides the energy needed for these exchanges and interactions (Montuori, 2011:62-64). Communication is impossible without the free flow of information or the interchange of knowledge. As such, the free flow of information becomes essential.

2.2.4.3 The Role of Systems Theories and Systems Thinking in Communication Theories

As presented throughout the literature thus far, information that informs communication is what binds a system together with the purpose of achieving the system's goals and objectives. While Almaney (1974:36) agrees with this view, Weick (1979) adds that communication forms part of an organising function within a system which is critical in managing emergent change. However, both these views emphasize the central role communication plays in the exchange of information within a system. According to systems theory, communication is a complicated process that incorporates many interconnected elements rather than merely an exchange of messages between people. The sender, the message, the medium, the receiver, feedback and the communication

context are some examples of these factors. Feedback, which describes how information is transferred between the many components of a communication system, is one of the fundamental ideas in systems theory.

As described earlier in this chapter, a system is a system because of the integration of its different parts in achieving a desired outcome (Yasar, 2022:para. 6). This integration can only be facilitated by communication that is effective, efficient and responsive to change. Quirke (1996:67-69) agrees and proposes that communication does not just have a role within the change process but is essentially central to making change happen. Furthermore, with systems being interrelated, changes in one sub-system can cause changes elsewhere in a system and equally reemphasizes the importance of communication in being a system binder. Malek and Yazdanifard (2012:52) states that change and communication go hand and that in getting communication right is vital in making change happen in an organisation. The intersection of communication, planned change and emergent change becomes a crucial point of reference for comprehending the comprehensive character of transformative processes in organisations.

The following section of literature will present the dynamic and unpredictable nature of change that naturally arises in complex organisational systems, building on the theoretical frameworks and recognising the connections between communication and change.

2.3 Emergent Change Management

Emergence, which is rooted in systems thinking and central to self-organisation within the Chaos theory, captures the idea that unexpected and unique results can emerge from the relationships and interdependencies inside a system. This provides the framework for investigating emergent change. Emergence adds a fascinating layer to the complicated dynamics of organisational change by recognising that it can sometimes arise naturally from the intricate interactions between different components of the organisational system rather than always being a linear, controlled process. This shift asks us to investigate the relationship between emergent change's inherent unpredictability and flexibility and effective communication, which is acknowledged as a key component of change management.

Modern organisations are constantly going through dynamic changes. Within the topic of change management, literature is mostly dominated by planned or emergent change theories and models. Literature within change management was first developed by Lewin in 1946, who presented his theory on planned changes (Todnem, 2005). Since its inception, there has been many debates as to the framework for change management. Numerous authors (Kotter 1996; Balogun & Hope Hailey 2004; Todnem 2005; Burnes 2017:263) have come to a consensus as to the two fundamental issues; namely, the pace of change has increased in recent times; and that change is triggered by various types of internal or external forces. As presented in Section A of this chapter, systems and thus organisations require change to develop new levels of sophistication and success. Change is not the exception – it is the rule and now more than ever with changes in technology, dynamic work forces as well as external pressures not being able to manage change can have detrimental effects on operational efficiency and eventually company performance. Johnson (2017:15) agrees and states that “companies seeking new competitive advantage are recognizing the emergent path as an effective strategy in the quest to forge long-sustainability” and often do not know how to develop the skills to achieve this.

2.3.1 The Important Role of Systems in Understanding Change

Change is the only constant and is a frequently used term to describe the modern, dynamic world we live in today. From an organisational perspective, managing change, both planned and unplanned has become an essential skill that contributes to a successful and efficient organisation. An organisation is essentially a social system made up of employees who come from various backgrounds, skill competencies and culture. The rapid development of technology and globalisation impacts the complexity of these social systems, where we are increasingly becoming more interconnected and thus developing now more than ever, more complex systems that are highly interrelated. Arnold and Wade (2015:670) suggest that due to the increasingly complex world we live in, that *Systems Thinking* as presented in the previous section offers a solution to better understand the “deep roots” of complex behaviours and therefore, allowing you to better approach complex problems through enhanced predication and adjustment of outcomes.

With systems being interconnected, they can change and form new behaviours. Therefore, understanding the dynamics of a system can assist in managing change. Furthermore, the various system theories offer a better explanation of how systems work, such as the *Chaos Theory* which is presented in this study as a focus area. Both *Systems Thinking* and the *Chaos Theory* add importance to this study as these theories offer a contemporary view of managing emergent change in modern, dynamic workplaces. One of the critical links between Systems Thinking and the Chaos Theory is that both schools of thought recognise the importance and impact small changes have on a system. With the focus of the study being on emergent, unplanned changes, Senge (1990:49) confirms that “Systems Thinking also shows that small, well-focused actions can sometimes produce significant, enduring improvements”.

The importance of adapting to change was initially introduced by Greek philosopher, Aristotle. Aristotle defined change as “the actualization of what is potentially, ³*qua* potential” (Kostman, 1987:3). This process driven definition was later developed by biologist, Charles Darwin, whose work around natural selection and survival of the species holds significance within the topic of change. Darwin’s work highlights that a species survival depends on its adaptation to change. Megginson (1963:4) paraphrased Darwin’s work and says:

“its not the most intellectual of the species that survives; its not the strongest that survives; but the species that survives is the one that is able best to adapt and adjust to the changing environment in which it finds itself”.

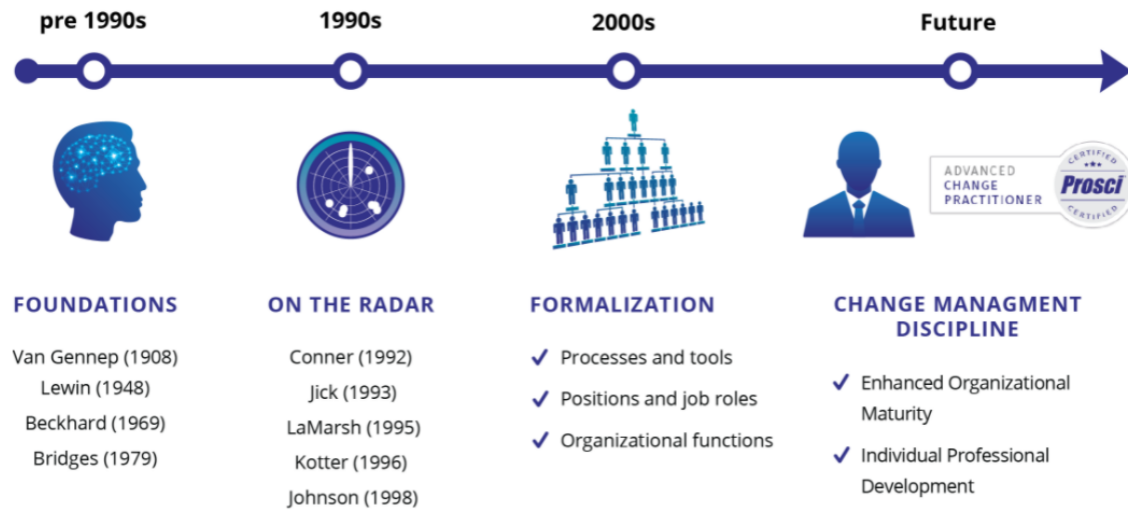
Although this explanation of Darwin’s work examine change from a species point of view, it still holds significance in terms of a modern, organisational view. From an organisational context and as a social system made up of the human species, a changing environment is constant and being able to “adapt and adjust” to the ongoing changes is significantly important to the organisation’s survival. An organisation is an organic, social system that is made up of different departments that all function to achieve a specific goal. These

³ A latin term that means “in the capacity of; by virtue of being”.

departments or “interrelated parts” when put together form the organisation (the whole) – the basic concept of systems and systems theories. According to Caldwell (2019:1), you can only have greater clarity in managing change when you understand the precise nature of systems. Change occurs because of the interactions of the interdependent parts of a system. Therefore, it is the view of the researcher that before communication can fulfill its role in managing emergent change, that the concepts of emergent change need to be understood and how system theories; namely, the Chaos Theory informs an understanding of these changes through interdependency.

2.3.2 The History and Evolution of Change Management

Change is an integral part of life and is not a new concept. Heraclitus, a Greek Philosopher born in 535 BC, first introduced the importance of change with the quote “Change is the only constant” (Shree, 2014:5). From biology to sociology, change is an ever-present phenomenon. Change is the only constant in modern organisations and in life in general. However, there are two clear and often opposing types of change that dominates literature; namely, planned and emergent change (Juneja, 2021:para. 1-4). In framing the evolution of change management from planned to emergent, the evolution of change management and its origins needs to be presented. Prosci (2021:1) presents a simplified timeline of the development of Change Management into four eras. During the pre-1990’s the initial first era of change management was introduced and influenced by systems with the view of understanding human integration as a system. One of the most well-known contributions during this era and who developed one of the first change management models was Kurt Lewin (1948), who presented the view that change occurs in three states: unfreezing; moving and refreezing (Galli, 2018:124-125).



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Figure 2.7 – Change management timeline (Prosci, 2021 :1)

During the 1990's Change Management was put on the radar where it was seen as a formal discipline. Kotter's Change Management Model was one of the most popular models, however, it was only until recently where the shift has been from the importance of planned change to emergent change. Planned change models, such as McKinsey 7-S Change Management Model, ADKAR Change Management Model, Kübler-Ross Five Stage Change Management Model and Lewin's Change Management Model have dominated the study of change management for over five decades (Jouany and Martic, 2020:para. 9).

Planned change is seen as developmental and is often used by organisations in certain circumstances, such as developing incentive systems, mergers and restructuring. Blomme (2012:7) argues that change is unplanned and therefore contradicts the theories of planned change. Although change can be planned, such as in the case of a restructuring where the organisation has predetermined communication plans to communicate the details to employees, change is essentially an unplanned process. Although management can allocate resources in the planning and execution of change management plans, there are variables within this process that cannot be controlled nor planned for. As with the example above, employees could resist the change strategies and the strategy could lack important information that can prevent the interpretation of the

strategy, such as a language barrier. There are numerous variables within the process to indefinitely say that change is completely planned. There will always be an element of unplanned change or at least an unplanned response to change.

There are various challenges within the concept of planned change processes. Although in some cases such as mergers and restructuring, an element of planned change is necessary to ensure that there is conformity and consistency with the roll out of the change process. However, the day-to-day activities within an organisation are in a constant state of change and therefore, planned changes are inappropriate in managing these day-to-day changes. Quain (2019:1) states that “without step-by-step planning, change in an organisation is likely to fall apart or cause more problems than benefits”. The author goes on to say that “you need to understand exactly what changes will take place and how those changes will occur”. However, although the researcher agrees with the latter statement, Quain’s view that a step-by-step process is needed to properly plan, does not consider the fact that within modern organisations that changes occur so rapidly that once a plan is formulated that it is most likely irrelevant and changes have occurred to a point where the plan itself does not adequately represent the occurring changes.

In Kogetsidis (2012:189) article entitled *Critical Systems Thinking: A Creative Approach to Organisational Change* the author states:

To deal with the high level of complexity and uncertainty that organisational change usually involves, managers are faced with a wide range of contradictory and often confusing theories and approaches, which all promise immediate solutions to all problems. Such approaches, however, not being holistic in nature, focus only on parts of the problem situation rather than the whole, take little account of the interactions between the parts, and try to arrive at quick solutions that aim to bring immediate benefits. Such approaches therefore offer inadequate solutions and result in change initiatives often failing to meet anticipated objectives.

This article argues that a typical, planned approach to organisational changes is unable to deal with organisational complexity. Managers will need to employ systems ideas to facilitate change implementation. From the perspective of change, planned change assumes that you know your environment and these variables and changes are known to you. However, emergent change implies that there is constant change. With constant change, a system needs to adapt an approach that is responsive and adaptive versus a strategy approach that is used to manage planned change. Burnes (2017:263) explains that although planned change can be appropriate in some situations there is still debate regarding the efficiency of planned change and the view that planned change does not adopt an open-systems approach and has a finite end point. As described by Burnes (2017:363) and a key component of the study, the emergent approach to change sees change “emerging from the day-to-day actions and decisions of members of organisation.”

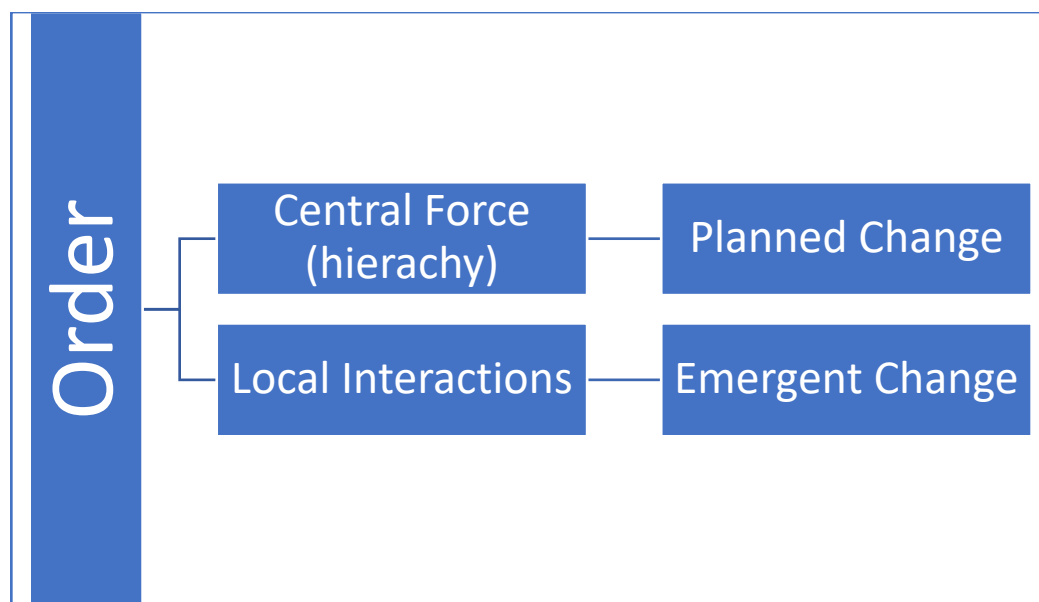


Figure 2.8 – Order from the view of a central force and local interactions (Adapted from deJong and deBoer (2003:11))

As presented in Figure 2.8 above, the Chaos Theory’s view of control and change challenges this traditional view and suggests that order is not obtained from control from

a central position but from the interactions of employees within various levels of the organisations. deJong and deBoer (2003:11) concur and states that self-organisation creates spontaneous order out of chaos and that “this order is not a result of some central organising force but of (local) interactions between the elements of the system”. One can then assume that central forces, such as managers in key positions, attempt to use planned change to control. As highlighted throughout the literature, emergent change is too frequent and chaotic to be managed by planned change and planned change, furthermore, is driven by strategy.

2.3.3 The limitations of Planned Change and Strategy in Dynamic Organisations

The term strategy is often used in organisations very loosely. However, it holds important significance in understanding change and the impact it has on driving organisations towards self-organisation. Mintzberg (1987:11) defines strategy as having “two essential characteristics: they are made in advance of the actions to which they apply, and they are developed consciously and purposely”. According to this definition, the concept of strategy requires long-term planning implying a lack of importance on a process or “strategy” that allows for that system or organisation to be flexible and respondent to emergent change. With systems or modern organisations being by nature chaotic, emergent change within an organisation cannot therefore not be managed by strategy in its traditional term as it does not lend to how modern organisations function.

Zahn (1999:8) suggests that with modern systems being so sensitive to change that one needs to firstly take a “strategic thinking” approach before strategic planning is done. Strategic thinking, like Systems Thinking, looks at the interrelatedness of variables within an organisation, where insights provide the knowledge needed to inform decision making processes. Haycock *et al.* (2012:1) define strategic thinking as an “innovative, creative, and right-brained process that encourages an open exchange of ideas and solutions to meet the dynamic, often unpredictable challenges faced in today’s economy”. According to Zahn (1999:8), strategic thinking focusses on gaining insights into changes occurring in the organisation, whereas strategic planning takes these discovered insights and turns them into actions. Adding to this, Haycock *et al.* (2012:1), states that strategic planning

requires linear, analytical processes while strategic thinking is more complex and by way of contrast is more suitable for organisations in emergent change.

Strategy within modern organisations is essentially top-down and an organisation's strategy is driven down the lines of the organisation's hierarchy and structure. With managers and supervisors managing their respective departments, they are inversed and more aware of the changes happening in their respective departments. Kim *et al.* (2014:7) in the same vein suggests that these top-down strategies and planning reflect the intentions of senior management and what could be seen as one-way, bureaucratic structures. In view of the impact of structure and strategy on managing emergent change with strategic thinking, it can then be said that organisational hierarchy and their internal structures have an influence on how efficiently emergent change is dealt with.

As leaders in directing an organisation's strategic goals and operations, management are expected to identify changes and subsequently, make the necessary corrective action. Hey and Moore (1998:10) offer a contrasting school of thought that management are often the last to know about changes, which raises the view that management are often leading from behind. This leads to the view that when managers feel they are out of control of the organization, they resort to implementing more control. According to Asif and Sargeant (2000:314) "the quality of informal communication appears to be directly related to individual management styles."

This process can lead to a disparity between the expected management function of managing an organisation and identifying changes within an organisation. Managers tend to then subsequently rely on resources as a way in which to control a system that seems to be moving out of control. Hey and Moore (1998:10) offer the opinion that resources such as polls and surveys are often carried about by management to attempt to identify changes and the causes thereof. However, these resources "offer numerically precise conclusions" and give management a false sense of understanding of changes within the organisation.

Therefore, it is the view of the researcher that planned change cannot be used as a management tool in managing day-to-day changes in a modern dynamic organisation. Equally a change management theory would also not suffice as it is similarly step-by-step

driven and the time delay between planning and execution would make planned changes irrelevant. Added to this are the evident colonial influences on change management and communication that still exist and that inform how managers manage interactions and change within an organisation. Nkoma *et al.* (2015:16-17) agrees and states that change management and communication are largely unexplored from an African context, lending to the assumption that there is a need for a culturally specific approach to managing emergent change from a South African perspective.

2.3.4 Colonial Influences on Emergent Change Management: A South African Paradox

Change management processes and theories in general are largely dominated by global views and theories. Louw and Jackson (2008:17) suggests that there are very few leadership and change management studies that are African based and that most theories rely on colonial systems that are western driven and focused on individualism. Reflecting on the above, it can be argued that the dominant change management theories offered in the above section are exclusively developed by American and European theorists. These views are informed by the culture of these theorists and therefore, propose that from a South African perspective lack cultural context. With communication and behaviour being influenced by culture, even management styles have an influence on how change is managed and communicated.

Louw and Jackson (2008:17) suggests that South African managers are influenced by more of a hybrid model that sees influences from post-colonial, western, eastern and African ideas and theories. However, the researcher suggests that this can still be problematic as it relies heavily on the manager's skills and influences. This could then lead to a manager using a predominantly western influence and not having the ability to interpret the socio-cultural context within the organisations and subsequently not be able to adapt their management style and processes to effectively manage emergent change in a diverse workforce. Furthermore, the implication of gender equality is a considerable factor within diversifying change management. According to Zu Selhausen and Weisdorf (2016:1895-1896), the marginalization of women is rooted in colonial times that saw the formal sector being reserved for men while females occupied informal sectors.

Because culture varies from individual to individual and organisation to organisation, what defines a leader or manager will also differ to be able to adapt to specific and unique organisational needs. Leadership is not delivered by a single individual but is rather dependent on the interaction between an agent and its organisation and is constructed from social recognition. This view sees all members in an organisation as “change agents” that can influence change and not just managers or key people in the organisation’s hierarchy.

Change is no longer a foreign concept for most employees. The 2019 Deloitte Human Capital Trends Report for South Africa offers insights from a South African perspective concerning key leadership skills needed for leaders in the 21st century. The respondents from the study were asked what they see as the unique requirements for a leader in South Africa in the 21st century. The findings revealed that 80% of the respondents indicated that the most important requirements were leading through influence and 83% indicated that to lead amidst complexity/ambiguity as being a unique leadership skill (Deloitte, 2019:13-14). This research further emphasizes the need for a *glocal* framework to manage emergent change guided by internal communication that is culturally relative. Communication is the lifeblood of an organisation that influences behaviour and significantly directs the behaviour of a system to be in a better position to manage emergent change in dynamic organisations.

2.3.5 The Dynamics of Emergent Change

One thing that theorists can agree on is that change is constant and is everywhere. As highlighted above (2.3.2), change was predominately split into two types: planned and unplanned. However, as the literature has developed there are various other change types that relate to change in an organisation. According to Juneja (2021:para.1-2), other change types include operational; incremental; strategic; fundamental; and reactive change to name a few. Although emergent change has become the dominant theory for dynamic organisations, Burnes’ (2004:363) research proposes that planned and emergent change should not be seen as competing theories where an organisation must pick just one approach.

Liebhart and Garcia-Lorenzo (2010:216) define emergent change as being “unexpected, unintentional, continuous...and happening in real-time”. With the theoretical foundation of change management and thus emergent change having its roots in System Theories and Systems Thinking, the emergent property of a system is what led to the conceptualizing of emergent change from a management perspective. In fact one of the principles of a system is its emergent properties. Emergent properties from a systems perspective are broken down into two distinct types: type I (sum of the actions) and type II (emergent – product of interactions) as represented in Figure 2.9.

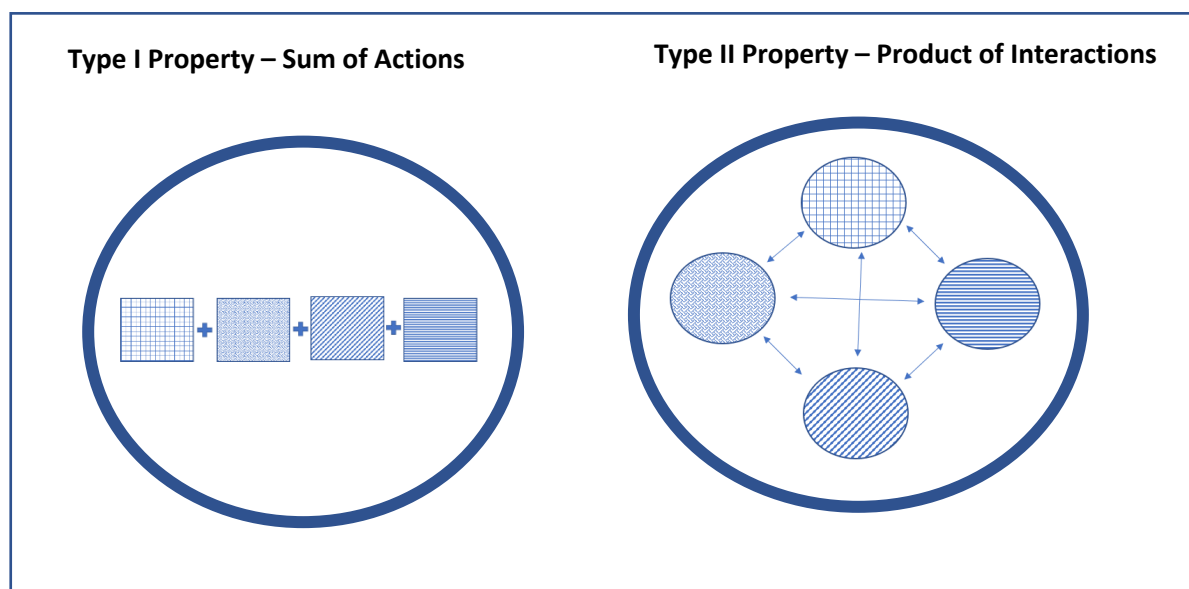


Figure 2.9 – Type I and Type II Emergent Properties (Gharajedaghi, 2011b:45)

Gharajedaghi (2011:46) offers a practical analogy to explain the difference between type I and type II emergent properties by explaining what makes a football team a winning team – “what characterizes a winning team is not only the quality of its players but also the quality of the interactions among them”. This view proposes that even if you have the best individual players in a team does not necessarily mean you can win. Success is based on the interactions of the different players and how they can play together as a team. Interactions are further influenced by variables in a system or organisation.

As presented in Chapter 2 (2.4.1), third generation Systems Thinking sees the importance of interdependency and self-organisation but an additional focus on socio-cultural

systems and the element of choice. Sociocultural elements such as love, success and happiness have always been ignored within analytical approaches. However, these independent variables are in fact no longer independent according to Gharajedaghi (2011:63) and are *interdependent*. This lends to the proposed Chaos Theory framework for managing emergent change and a system thinking approach.

Figure 3.3 presents the view of independent variables from the perspective of planned change and traditional change management practices. These variables are taken at face value and viewed in isolation. This view does not consider that each of these variables may possibly influence each other. According to Liebhart and Garcia-Lorenzo (2010:222) traditional change management is sequential and follows as step-by-step process as depicted in the figure below. The Figure 2.10 offers a visual example of the concepts of independent variables by using an event such as a launch of a new product. Various departments are involved in the process such as marketing, logistics and sales to mention a few. From this point of view, each department contributes to the event in isolation.

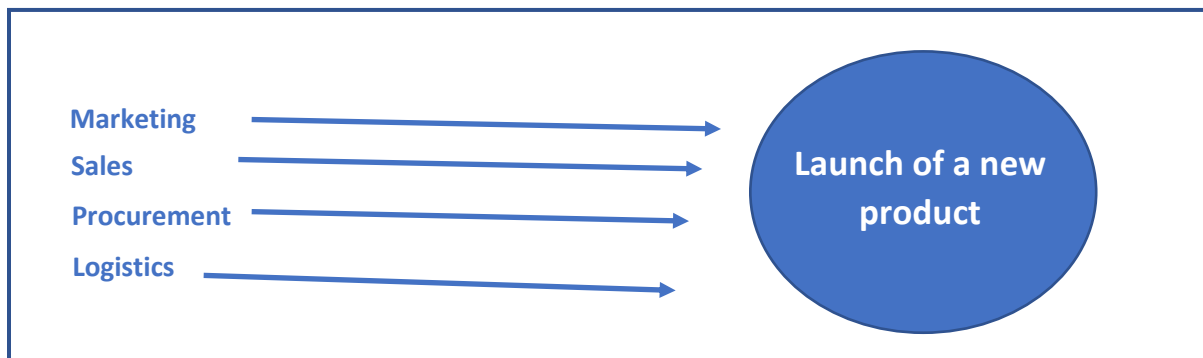


Figure 2.10 – Independent variables in planned change (Gharajedaghi, 2011:46)

However, dynamic, modern organisations cannot function in isolation, including the departments that make up an organisation. Figure 2.10 presents variables as interdependent during emergent change. The figure presents the interdependency of these variables and the interactions between these variables. This is a dynamic process that sees interdependent variables continually interacting.

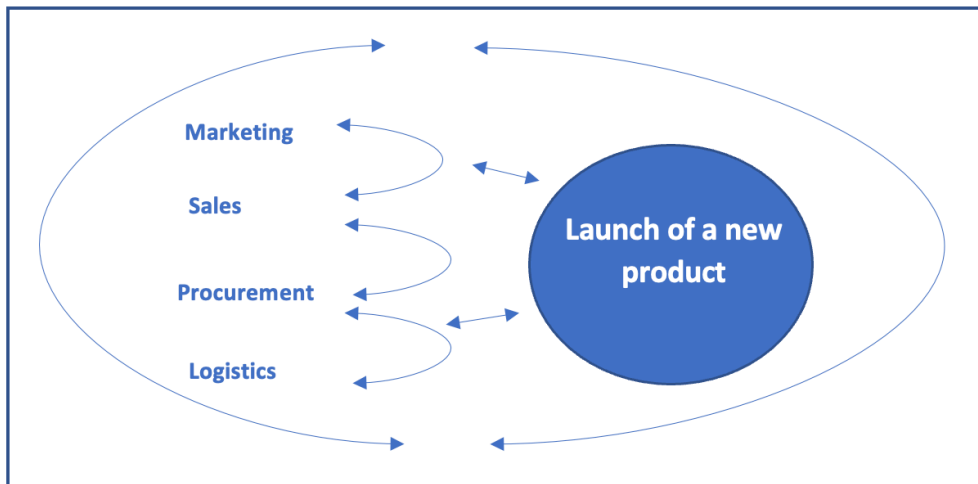


Figure 2.11 – Interdependent variables in emergent (Gharajedaghi, 2011b:46)

In this example, the launch of a new product cannot be done with departments working in insolation. For example, the marketing team cannot successfully put a marketing campaign together if they do not know the details and features of the product. Additionally, the sales team cannot sell the new product to clients and arrange delivery if they are unaware of the resources and delivery schedule of the logistics department. However, what is the common variable or factor between both these figures (Figure 2.10 and Figure 2.11) is communication. Neither of these types of changes, planned and emergent can occur successfully without communication. Lundberg (1990:693) states that its self-evident that communication facilitates all organisational changes and therefore, forms the central activity.

Based on the above process, it can therefore be proposed that a successful and efficient organisation or department is not solely based on the skills and efficiency of individual employees but on the successful and efficient interaction between these employees and departments. Interaction is facilitated by efficient internal organisational communication. Managing the interaction of these interdependent variables within the emergent change process is critical in creating an adaptive and sophisticated system, a process that needs to be people centred.

2.3.5.1 *Emergent Change Management as a Maintenance Process: People Centred and driven from the “Bottom-up”*

Before you manage change, you need to learn to manage people.

Emergent change cannot be analyzed in a traditional way and be manipulated by analytical tools and models. Analytical tools for managers to manage change are systematic and usually based on traditional change management models such as Kotter’s Change Management Model, McKinsey 7-S Change Management Model, ADKAR Change Management Model, Kübler-Ross Five Stage Change Management Model and Lewin’s Change Management Model as presented in Section 2.3.2 (Jouany and Martic, 2020:para. 9). These traditional change management models are what inform how change is viewed and communicated to various other people in an organisation and managers often have a direct influence on how change is communicated down the hierarchy.

According to Locomote (2021:1) and a report produced by Towers Watson, there is concerning statistics on the understanding of change at different hierarchical levels. This report states that 68% of senior managers understand the reason for change while 53% of middle management and 40% of front-line supervisors only felt they were informed of change. It is evident from this research that the lower the level of management, the less employees were informed about change. In the researcher’s perspective, these statistics raise concern in that communication regarding change seems to depreciate as information flows from senior management down the hierarchy. This lends to the belief that the process is top-down and not ideal in managing emergent change that is fundamentally driven by day-to-day changes occurring at lower levels.

A major development of emergent change is an emphasis on “bottom-up” action rather than “top-down” control in commencing and implementing organisational change. The rationale behind this is that the pace of change is so rapid and complex, that once it occurs, it is impossible for senior management to identify, plan and implement every action required. The responsibility for change is, therefore, more devolved and as a result, requires great changes in the roles played by management. They change from being a controller to a facilitator, fulfilling a maintenance role. As described earlier in the chapter,

change management models and subsequent leadership models in managing change are often ineffective. Towler (2019:1) agrees and explains that there is little empirical evidence to support the notion that leadership models are effective in managing change. Towler (2019:1) adds that “change did not work despite the best leadership models being implemented. Such findings challenge the effectiveness of such models and raise the question of whether they can be successful in the first place”.

Traditionally, change management strategies are top-down and asymmetrical, they are seen as being far more efficient as there is little to no input from lower levels of employees. However, the paradox is that to develop these plans, senior management relies on the information that is fed to them for them to advise on the change management plan. This poses a challenge as change occurs so rapidly that it is impossible for senior managers to effectively identify, plan and implement the necessary organisational responses (Kogetsidis 2012:189-191). Bottom-up strategies have been criticized for being inefficient and hard to control (Smith, 2008:353-366, Eveleigh, 2019:para. 5-8, Malsam, 2019:para. 14-16). Conversely, from the perspective of managing emergent change, control is one of the hindrances in efficiently managing emergent change and therefore, bottom-up led change is suitable as there is limited control from senior management. Top-down strategies as mentioned above are faster. However, they are not as long lasting. On the other hand, bottom-up led strategies are longer lasting. According to Eveleigh (2019:1), they are aligned to the research, bottom-up change is more introspective with little influence from external issues and therefore suited for managing emergent change.

A further advantage of this approach is that the actual situation within the business is being acted upon, rather than an impression of the business which may or may not reflect reality (as with top down).

Within complex systems, leadership in its traditional form or even more modern concepts such as transactional and transformational leadership, is not simply a function of a person or persons but seen more of as an activity or process. Blomme (2012:5) suggests that these traditional and modern leadership styles assume leadership takes place in an organised system where change is controlled and communication and information flow is top-down within a hierarchical system. Furthermore, this view suggests a cause-and-

effect relationship that occurs in a predictable social system within the organisation. The literature has presented that modern organisations are in a constant state of change and are neither predictable nor stable. It is therefore the view of the researcher that managing emergent change in an organisation should be process driven and not merely a management or leadership theory, which as presented is based on predictable social systems and stability. Hazy and Uhl-Bien (2014:3) state that leadership in complex systems is not considered to be a person or persons but a “recognizable pattern of organising activity among autonomous heterogeneous individuals as they form into a system of action”.

Blomme (2012:5-6) suggests that managers act as change agents within an organisation that influence the behaviour and interactions of individuals within the organisation. However, it is the view of the researcher that every individual in an organisation can be referred to as a change agent. Presented in Figure 2.9, individuals in an organisation are referred to as “interdependent variables” and thus the interdependency quality of individuals makes them change agents – everyone has the ability to implement change. From the Chaos Theory perspective, an individual that implements a small change or even change of behaviour or action could result in a major change occurring in another department. Their actions and behaviours can have a butterfly effect on the entire organisation over time which could result in chaos.

Just like strange attractors are responsible for maintaining systems at the “edge of chaos” or an ordered chaos, Galacgac and Singh (2015:519-520) propose that organisations have what is referred to as attractor agents. Strange attractors act like magnets that keep a system to a bounded order during chaos. Attractor agents within an organisation hold those qualities that other people gravitate towards. However, each agent interprets the organisations vision, mission, guidelines and rules differently and therefore leads to multiple pathways towards the same company goal. Therefore, managers as custodians of managing emergent change need to have these attractor qualities to be able to manage emergent change and influence behaviour. They also need to be given enough flexibility and autonomy to adapt strange attractors according to the needs of their department.

Change by nature is a process. One can then assume that the management of emergent change should equally be a process. As introduced in Chapter 2, the concept of change is not new and dates back to the times of Aristotle who first defined change as “the actualization of what is potentially, ⁴*qua* potential” (Kostman, 1987:3). The use of the term “actualization” in Aristotle’s definition refers to a process-view. Further breaking down this definition, “process” is defined by (Merriam-Webster, 2024:para. 1) as a “series of actions that produce something or lead to a particular result” and “a series of changes that happen naturally”. This definition further iterates the importance of actions and subsequently, interaction.

Emergent properties and emergent change see the process of interaction as paramount. The use of the term interaction implies a dynamic process and within the concept of modern, dynamic organisations holds significance. When there are dynamic changes in an organisation and as mentioned in Section 3.4.5, following rigid management practices and leadership theories to manage emergent change can be problematic as there is not enough flexibility to manage the element of employee interaction. According to Gharajedaghi (2011:47)

If emergent properties are the spontaneous outcome of ongoing processes, then to understand them one has to understand the processes that generate them. If success is an emergent property, then it has to be about managing interactions rather than actions.

A maintenance process for managing emergent change allows for greater flexibility and the free flow of information – elements that are needed to manage emergent change in a dynamic organisation. The benefit of a maintenance process that is driven from bottom-up is that the information provided by the system or employee is based on actual information that is current, introspective and relevant to the changes occurring. This gives managers enough information to make decisions and “maintain” emergent change. Emergent change is constant. There is no end point and thus emergent change occurs in an ongoing dynamic state. The Chaos Theory in essence, encompasses maintaining an

⁴ A latin term that means “in the capacity of; by virtue of being”.

organisation at the edge of chaos where it is at its most adaptive. The view of the researcher is that change needs to happen at each management level to be efficient. As change agents, if managers are not sensitive to changes, information will not reach senior management and decision makers. Managers are gate keepers. It is the view of the researcher that a *glocal* communication process is needed to manage emergent change.

Unlike the Chaos Theory, John Kotter's 8-step "change management" approach puts senior managers at the centre of change and sees them as enforcers of change, whereas the Chaos Theory puts the actual "system" at the centre. The research proposes that this leads to the need for managers to act as change agents and facilitate the process of emergent change. Emphasis would then be on the process of facilitating change and not on a rigid model that does not lead to managing emergent change in complex systems. Putting managers at the centre lends more to control than facilitation or as the researcher proposes a concept of maintenance. The concept of maintenance suggests a process not a theory. Liebhart and Garcia-Lorenzo (2010:216) agree and states that people's interactions lead to unpredictable outcomes and difficulties in predicting and therefore planning beforehand is counterintuitive and the possible reason why change management plans fail.

According to Faeste et al. (2014:1) 75% of change management plans fail and do not achieve their intended objectives. The researcher believes that it is because they are 'plans' and not a process. Plans take time to develop and then thereafter to implement. With emergent change this is an inefficient process as by the time the plan is implemented, the system has yet again changed, making the plan obsolete. Towler (2019:1) agrees and states:

Given the complexity of workplace dynamics, it is important to realize that traditional linear models fall short of providing an adequate narrative of how change influences organisations in day-to-day work. This is an advantage of Chaos Theory: it is reflective of daily realities.

Using rigid change management models and top-down strategies to manage emergent change is inefficient especially for dynamic organisations. With emergent change being iterative, the researcher proposes a maintenance process in managing emergent change

that sees managers as change agents maintaining emergent change from information from the bottom up. A maintenance process lends more to an ongoing, dynamic process of “managing” relationships and interactions within an organisation. This maintenance process as suggested is driven by the flow of information and internal organisational communication. The critical element in emergent change theory and systems thinking is the importance of information flow. Having presented the importance of the flow of information and communication in Section 2.2.4 as well as framed its importance within the context of systems thinking and emergent change, the following section of literature presents internal organizational communication.

2.4 Internal Organisational Communication

Communication as the lifeblood of an organisation is critical in an organisation’s success and the impact employee interaction has within the organisation determines the information managers have available to make decisions and manage emergent change. Communication in an organisation can be anything from unstructured channels such as the “grapevine” to more structured channels such as memos. Welch and Jackson (2007:180) agree and emphasis the importance of internal organisational communication in workplace efficiency. The section will define internal organisational communication and secondly, present the different theories and frameworks for internal communication and its role in managing emergent change. The literature on the role of internal communication defined by Smith and Mounter (2005:125) excludes internal communication and change within the same spectrum. According to the authors, change communication is in a different spectrum to day-to-day communication. It is the view of the researcher that to maintain communication as a tool to manage emergent change, internal communication as a maintenance tool needs to be part of the day-to-day communication needs.

With so many factors affecting and influencing communication and more specifically internal organisational communication, it therefore, cannot be studied in isolation. The Systems Thinking approach will be studied in a heuristic approach and its philosophical and practical application to exploring the role of internal organisational communication in managing emergent change that is *glocally* appropriate. Baskin *et al.* (1997) asserts that from the perspective of examining internal organisational communication, Systems

Theories assist in understanding the relationship between the parts and the whole and subsequently assist in understanding how they are related.

2.4.1 History of Internal Organisational Communication

Internal organisational communication is a specialised form of employee communication that equally has its own history and origins. The origins of internal communication and the first formal form of internal communication were first traced back to 1840 with the introduction of the first publication called *Lowell Offering* written by employees for employees at New England Lowell Cotton Mill (Izquierdo, 2021:para. 2). Thereafter, employee communication and internal communication were largely dominated by publications within companies. According to Ruck and Yaxley (2013:13) with the increase of industrialization in the 19th and 20th century, formal internal communication such as newsletters and magazines, were used to bridge the gap between the personal contact of the employer and employee. With the increase of publications as a form of communicating with employees both locally and worldwide, professional journalists were hired to write and edit these employee publications and were referred to as industrial editors. This brought about an “editorial dilemma” in that journalists tended to be reactive and reporters of news with a technical focus (Brown, 2005:5-6) added to this is the perception that this form of communication was controlled and only selective information was shared. Figure 2.12 below presents a timeline of internal communication as discussed above from its inception to its current stage of development. The figure (2.12) presents internal communication from the perspective of the amount of input an employee has in internal communication, the amount of propaganda and the level of professionalism.

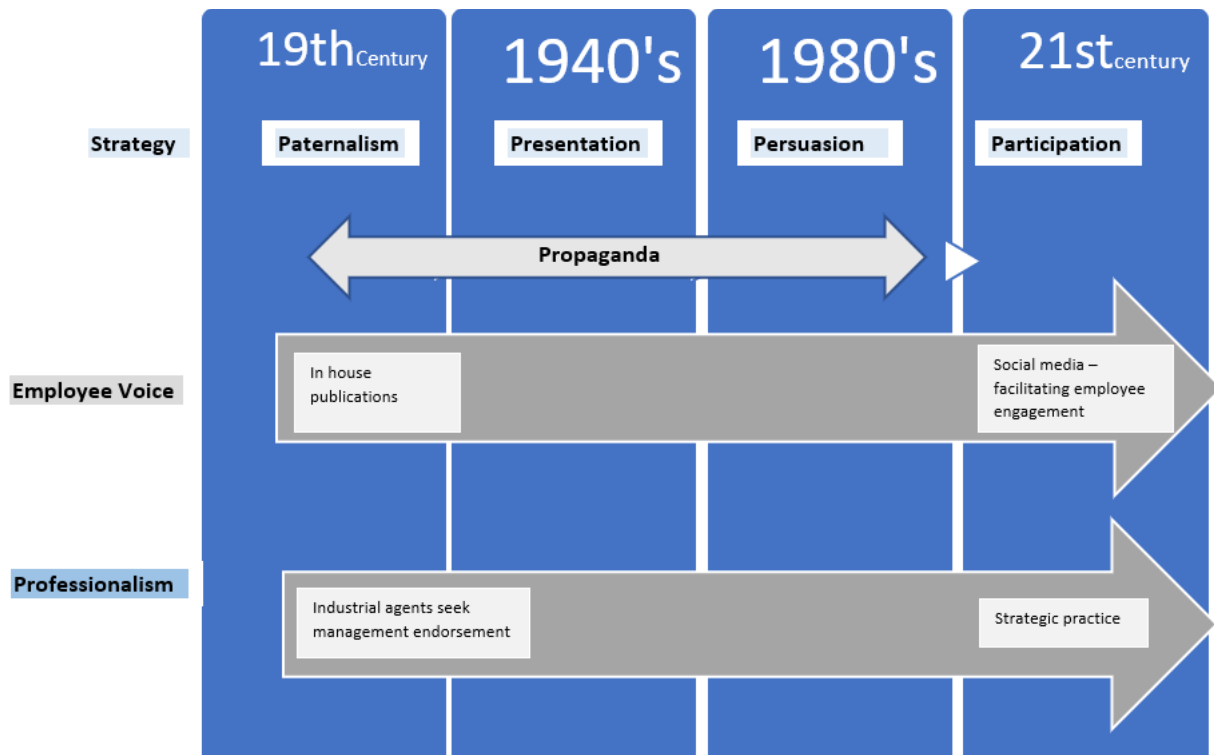


Figure 2.12 – Internal communication timeline - Voice, Professionalism and propaganda (Ruck and Yaxley, 2013 :14)

As presented in the Figure 2.12 above, internal communication has developed far beyond just publishing employee publications, to being considered as a critical, if not the most important tool in the success of a business. The traditional approach of internal communication that used journalists to create and edit content, according to Ruck and Yaxley (2013:14) still dominates the communication approaches of modern organisations and according to the authors, the command-and-control approach to communication still exists. Wright (1995:8) adds that although Public Relations Practitioners started to take on the role of internal communication that “the practice was still dominated by technical journalistic skills such as producing slick employee newsletters instead of concentrating on developing relationships with employees”. This view of seeing internal communication as a central role to managing and developing relationships is what has led to the essential development and evolution of the definition of internal communication. Furthermore, from a systems perspective of internal organisational communication, it helps in better understanding the people involved in the process, their cultural and social dynamics, the

channels of communications and the structure of the organisation that influences the flow of communication.

The next section will present the definition of internal communication and the significance of this definition within the framework of managing emergent change that is people centred against the backdrop of Systems Thinking.

2.4.2 Defining Internal Organisational Communication

With the history and development of internal communication, so has the definition of internal communication developed. Smidts *et al.* (2001:1051) states that internal communication is a “rather neglected, management instrument”. Smith and Mounter (2005:125) confirm this and add that although internal communication is on the top of managers agenda there is more priority paid to external communication, leaving internal communication as an afterthought. However, in presenting how to better use internal communication as a resource in managing emergent change within an organisation, one needs to clearly define it. There is much debate in defining internal communication, with most literature being dominated by Frank and Brownell (1989:5-6) definition:

“The communications transactions between individuals and/or groups at various levels and in different areas of specialisation that are intended to design and redesign organisations, to implement designs, and to co-ordinate day-to-day activities”.

Welch and Jackson (2007:179) criticize Frank and Brownell’s (1989:5-6) definition for being based on the field of study and practice and not integrated into the organisations’ strategic communication strategy. The author refers to this definition as “unhelpful” and explains that it is an “outdated, transactional” process. However, it is the view of the researcher that although the nature of communication has changed with the influence of technology and the frequent changes in modern organisations, this definition is more than appropriate for managing emergent change in a modern organisation and has its foundations in Systems Thinking. The researcher dissects the definition and its relevance to this study.

- *“Communication Transaction”*

The word “transaction” defined by Merriam-Webster (2021:para.1) is an “exchange” and a “communicative action or activity involving two or more parties...that reciprocally affect or influence each other”. Emphasis is on the exchange. This implies both parties must exchange information. Internal communication that is managed exclusively by a single person, such as a change manager or public relations person, describes more of a one-way process where there is little exchange and asymmetrical communication. Furthermore, it does not lead to a systems view of a feedback loop.

- *“Between individuals and/or groups at various levels”*

Welch and Jackson (2007:182-184) and Van Riel (1995) propose the need for internal communication to be more strategic. Strategy implies detailed planning and a process that is driven by senior management. Frank and Brownell’s (1989:5-6) definition is more inclusive and specifically states that it is communication between all levels and not top down driven. Therefore, interrelated from a systems point of view.

- *“Co-ordinate day-to-day activities”*

Emergent change is constant within a modern organisation. According to Liebhart and Garcia-Lorenzo (2010:222), emergent change happens in “real-time” so managers need to constantly adjust strategies to be able to co-ordinate day-to-day changes with internal communication. Based on the above definition, Poux-Berthe (2017:11) agree and state that amidst all the definitions of internal communication that two dimensions and characteristics are prominent: informational and relational. As dynamic and often seen as complicated as communication is, internal communication has to do with the exchange of information between the members of an organisation.

A Systems Thinking point of view as previously suggested is very useful in improving internal communication in that it can assist in mapping the flow of communication, identify feedback loops and focuses on collaboration. Amissah *et al.* (2020:1) agrees and states that Systems Thinking in internal organisational communication “helps meet the challenge of collaboration by showing people how their actions not only impact others in the system but also impact themselves in unintended and often undesirable ways”. The author goes

on to say that “everyone is in the same boat and therefore everyone needs to be responsible for redesigning the boat to be more functional.” This further suggests the importance of internal organisational communication from a systems perspective and its importance in collaboration as part of the communication transaction. A transaction that is influenced by the channel and type of communication, amongst other factors.

However, before discussing communication channels, types, flow of information and the cultural aspect of communication, the researcher will present the various internal communication models. With internal communication models serving as a framework or manual for businesses to develop, put into practice and assess their internal communication processes. Internal Communication Models are meant to assist organisations in developing an internal communication system that supports their objectives, beliefs and aims. In line with the study objective, these models are discussed and analysed in the next section with regards to their appropriateness from a South African context.

2.15.2 Internal communication models: assessing their appropriateness to manage emergent change from a *glocal* perspective

There are several models and theories that relate to internal organisational communication. According to Hume (2010:130) most of these models are considered in a “limited setting” or alternatively are within an “theoretical setting”. It is the view of the researcher that theories and models within this theoretical setting or framework are by nature inflexible and sequential, following a very specific step-by-step process. In meeting the study’s objective to examine the appropriateness of internal communication models for managing emergent change from *glocal* perspective, the researcher will analyze the following internal communication models: Steyn and Puth (2000) Strategic Communication Theory and Corporate Communication Strategy Model; Asif and Sargeants (2000) Internal Communication Model; Welch and Jackson (2007) Internal Corporate Communication Model; Verwey and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2003) Communication Triad at Work; and Van Riel (1995) Integrated Communication Model. The researcher

will present these models as well as their limitations from the perspective of being culturally appropriate and their ability to manage emergent change in dynamic, culturally diverse workplaces.

(i) Steyn and Puth (2000) Strategic Communication Theory and Corporate Communication Strategy Model

In presenting a *glocal* process for managing emergent change, Steyn and Puth (2000) model for corporate communication (Figure 2.13), although developed by South African authors, is limited in several ways and therefore not ideally suited to managing emergent change in a dynamic organisation. The researcher will present these limitations below.

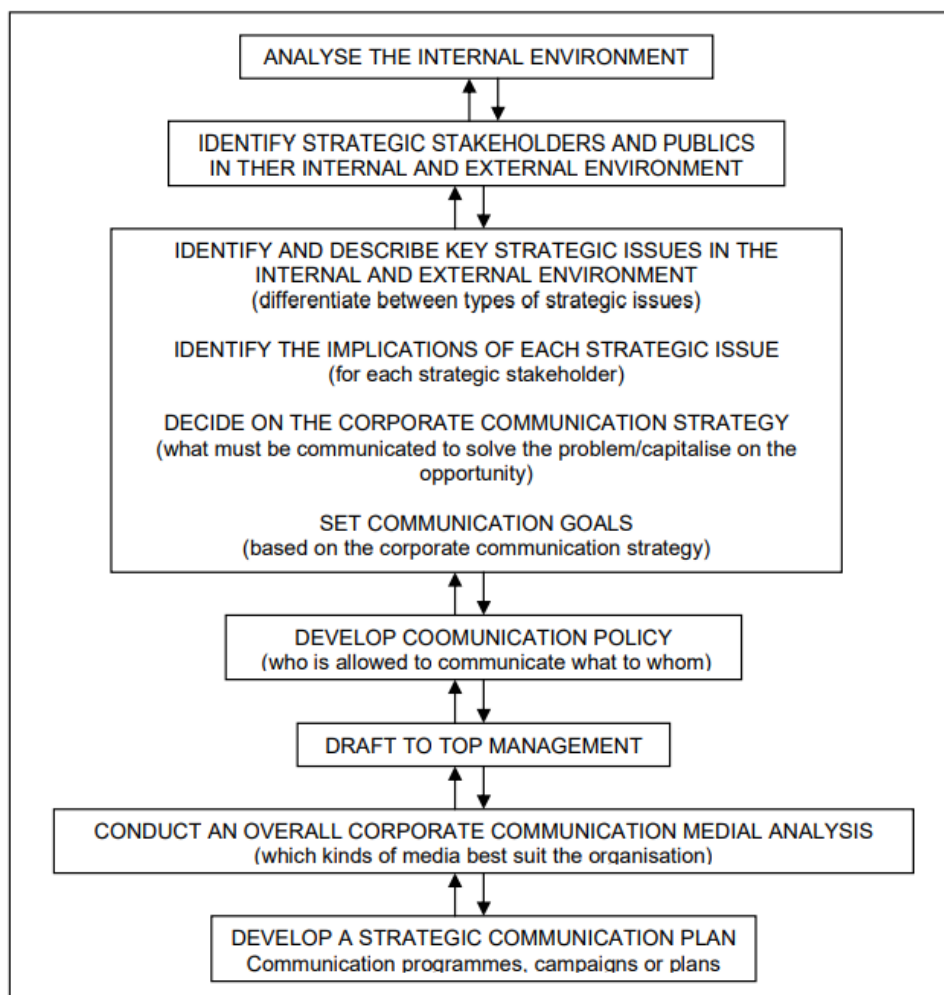


Figure 2.13 – Steyn and Puth (2000:63) Model for developing Corporate Communication strategy

- **Step-by-step, sequential process** - although the model has what seems like a two-way process, the elements are sequential. The strategy is only developed once each step has been completed. For example, the environment is analysed, communication policies developed and then analysed again before the communication plan is developed. This model is not process driven but more systematically driven. With emergent changes been driven by day-to-day changes, having a sequential, step-by-step model that focusses on strategy cannot adequately maintain these changes.
- **Implementation** – the model does not include the actual implementation of the “plan”. From the perspective of emergent change management as discussed in Section 2.3, emergent change within a modern organisation is constantly changing, having a step-by-step plan as presented by Steyn and Puth (2000) cannot adequately deal with emergent change as changes happen so frequently that once a plan is developed and actioned, the system or organisation has changed again making these changes obsolete or irrelevant.
- **Top-down dominated** – the model is top-down dominated. For example, the draft of the communication strategy is only sent to top management for review and no consultation is done with other employees. Section 2.3.5.1 of the literature presented managing emergent change from the bottom up. Eveleigh (2019:1) explains that when communication and information is driven from the top down, strategy and decisions are made based on the “impression” of what is happening in the organisations and not on the “actual” situation. Therefore, management then tend to make decisions based on what they think and not what is actually happening. The model presented by Steyn and Puth (2000) is inflexible, policy and strategy driven and not developed in conjunction with employees. It is the view of the researcher that internal communication is for the employees but top-down strategies look good on paper but are ineffective and inefficient in actually managing emergent change.

- **One-dimensional view of analysing the environment** – the model acknowledges the importance of analysing the environment. However, it focuses on the environment from the view of the organisations mission and vision as well as culture and values (Hume 2010:130). However, the culture and values are organisational focused and not those of the employees. The concept of Stigmergy, which was first introduced in Section 2.2.2 a (v), examines the impact of indirect communication employee behaviour and the impact the inter-attraction and interaction has on changing employee behaviour. This model does not take into account the culture and values of employees which has a direct impact on how they respond to changes.

(ii) *Asif and Sargeants (2000) Internal Communication Model*

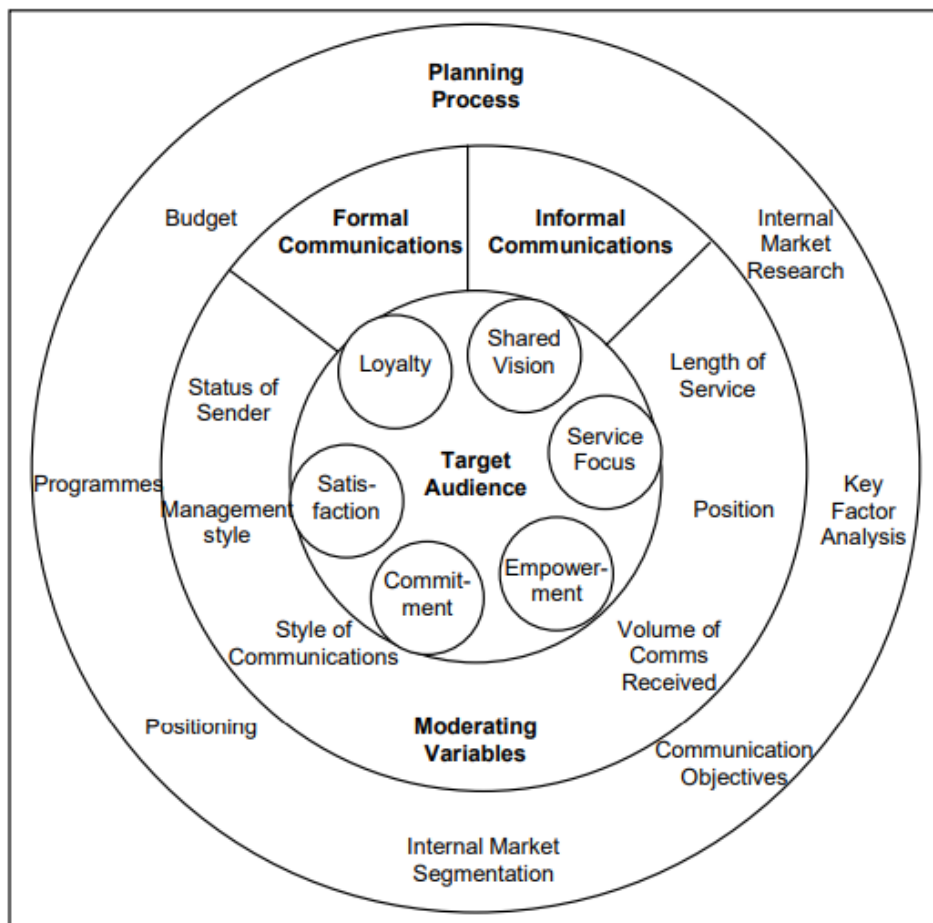


Figure 2.14 – Asif and Sargeant (2000:306) Model of Internal Communication

Like emergent change, the communication process described in Asif and Sargeant (2000) model is described as being iterative. The outer circle of the model deals with the communication process from the view of the authors, followed by moderating variables and the inner circle presents the desired outcomes from internal communication.

The researcher presents the following limitations of the model:

- **Limited focus on change** - the inner circle of the model presents the desired outcomes from internal communication. However, the desired outcomes fail to acknowledge the function of internal communication in managing change and is heavily focused on outcomes that are of benefit to the organisation. The outcome of internal communication was also largely based on extrinsic motivation such as bonuses and remuneration.
- **Exclusion of the impact of Culture** - the model also fails to acknowledge the influence culture has on internal communication, from both the perspective of organisational culture and the individual culture of employees.

(iii) Welch and Jackson (2007) Internal Corporate Communication Model

The below model presented by Welch and Jackson (2007) places managers at the centre of communication with the dotted line representing employees. The model proposes that the four goals; namely: belonging; awareness; understanding and corporate messages are critical in aligning employees with the strategic goals or plans of the organisation.

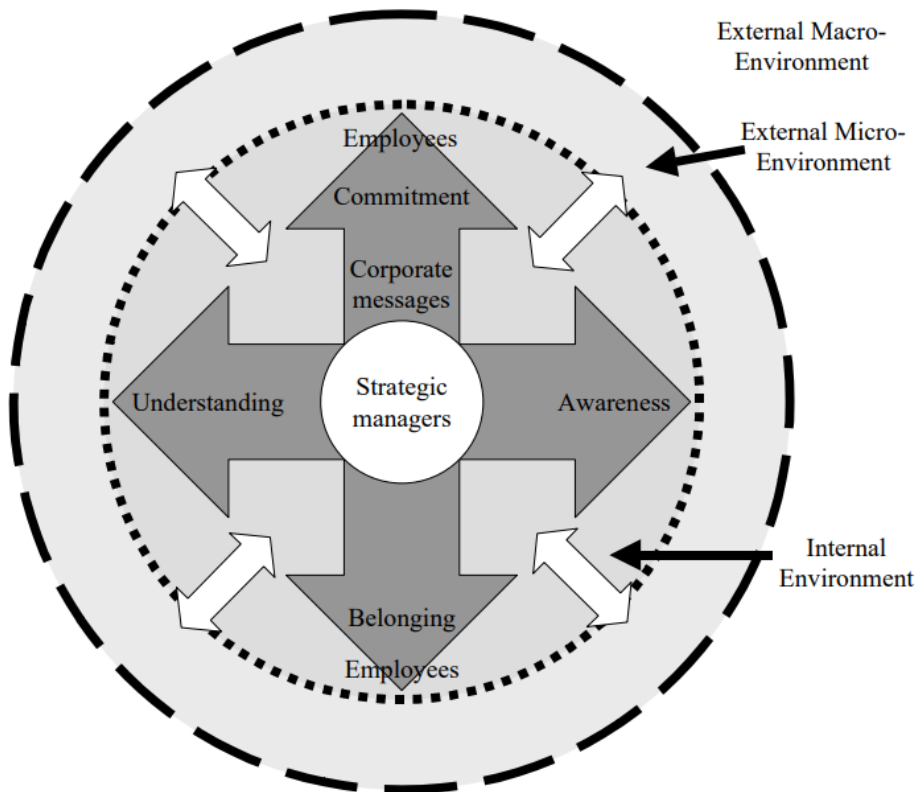


Figure 2.15 - Welch and Jackson (2007:186) Internal Corporate Communication Model

The researcher offers the following critique of the model from the perspective of managing emergent change with internal organisational communication:

- ***Communication from managers is symmetrical*** – indicated by the one-way arrows, the model suggests that the four goals (understanding, awareness, belonging and commitment) are only achieved via communication from strategic managers. The theory does not consider the critical importance of the role employees play in developing strategic goals. Although the model does acknowledge the two-way communication between employees and the internal and external microenvironment, the model is still exclusively focused on the role strategic managers have in driving communication towards achieving the four goals as laid out in the model.

- ***Exclusion of the impact of emergent change*** – the model does not address the impact of emergent change or change in general and the effect it has on the communication process. This further adds to the view of the researcher that there is a gap in the literature with regards to using internal communication as a maintenance tool in managing emergent change.
- ***Strategic managers are not clearly defined*** – the model places “strategic managers” at the centre of the strategic communication model. However, Welch and Jackson (2007:177-198) do not clearly define exactly who falls within this category. The researcher proposes that in order to manage emergent change, managers at all levels need to act as change agents in using communication as a maintenance tool. This includes managers and supervisors at all levels.

(iv) *Verwey and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2003) Communication Triad at Work*

Represented by a triangle, Verwey and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2003) “Triad of Work” provides a specific function for communication within the three key points: Tasking; Trending and Trusting. The function of “tasking” is where information is distributed according to roles and tasks of the actual job. “Trusting” is where employees develop new ideas and innovations that facilitates change. Finally, “Tending” is a function of the model that sees employees being recognized for supporting the organisations strategic goals, mission and vision.

The researcher offers the following critique:

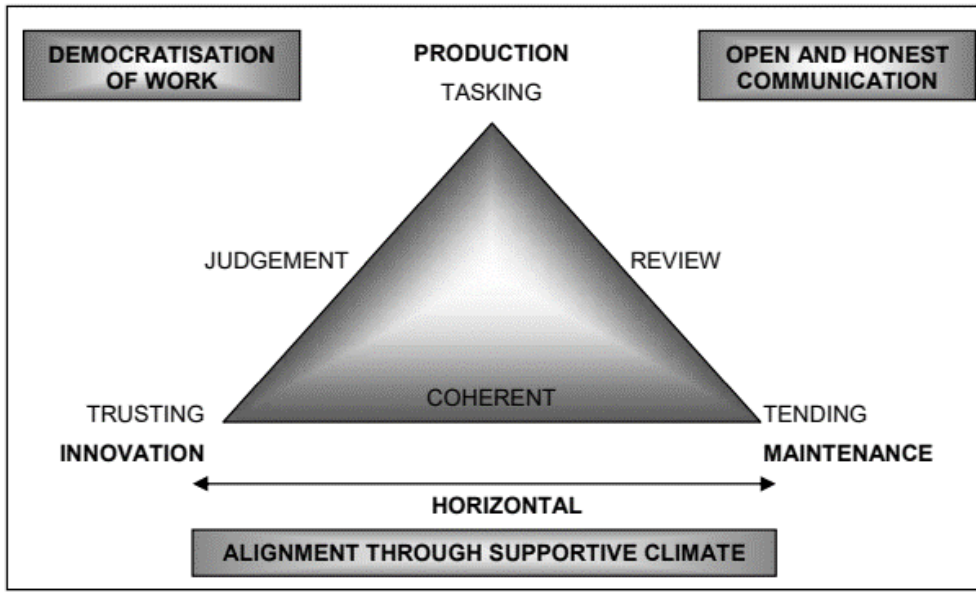


Figure 2.16 - Verwey and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2003:163) Communication Triad

- **Organisationally focused** - the model is heavily focused on the organisation and achieving the organisational goals. There is limited focus on employees and the role they play in internal communication.
- **Strategically focused, not process driven** - strategic alignment is a central focus in this model that views communication within its strategic role. This focus implies long term strategy and not day-to-day communication that impacts emergent change as put forward in this study. Furthermore, the model fails to provide insights into the communication process itself.

(v) *Van Riel (1995) Integrated Communication Model*

In defining internal communication, the authors are quick to define internal communication within the constructs of integrated communication models such as Van Riel (1995) and Argenti (1996) Corporate Communications Model's. The model presents strategy, identity and image as the starting points for communication within an organisation. The author refers to three types of communication; namely: Management; Organisational and Marketing Communication and how each of these are responsible for various facets of communication, for example internal communication.

The researcher offers the following criticism of the model:

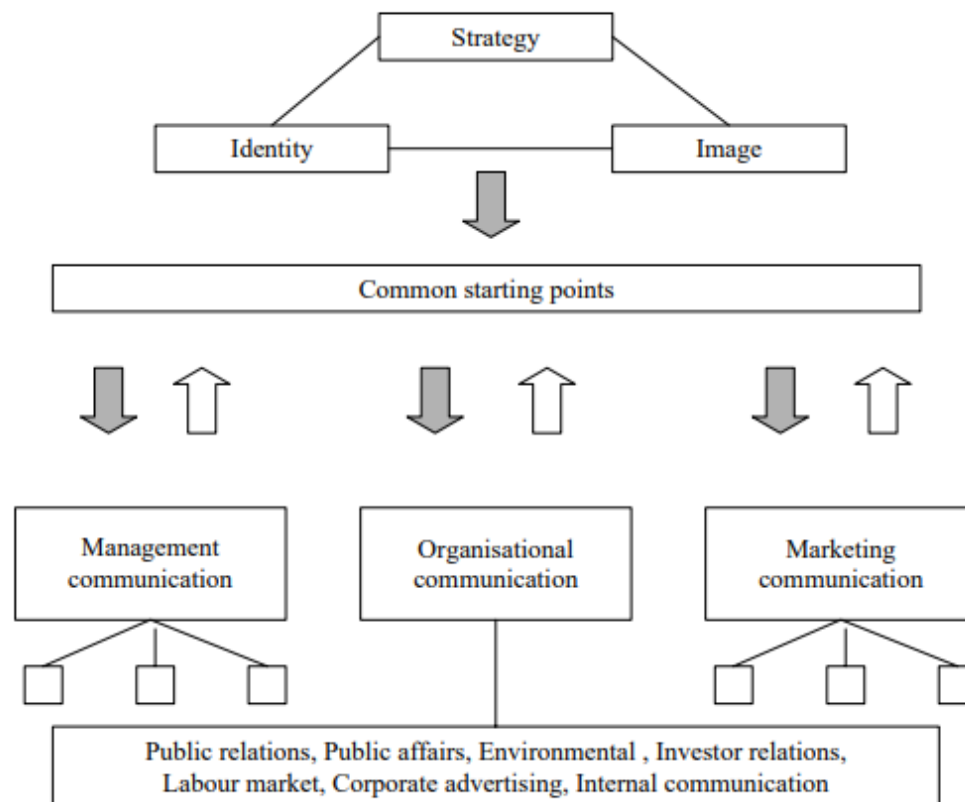


Figure 2.17 - Van Riel (1995) Integrated Corporate Communication Model (Welch & Jackson 2007:182)

- ***Positioning of internal communication*** – in this model, internal communication is positioned under organisational communication and according to the author, forms one of the several facets of organisational communication. As change agents', managers and supervisors form a critical role in managing emergent change and therefore form a critical link from the perspective of maintaining communication between employees and other managers. Internal communication is not just a function of organisational communication as proposed by the model.
- ***Communication process is linear and top-down*** – indicated by the one-way arrows, the model's "common starting points" for communication (strategy, identity,

and image) are linear and only driven from top-down. Furthermore, the solid line from organisational communication to internal communication presents the direct link between the two. The model fails to acknowledge the role managers play in internal communication. Additionally, the model itself is systematically and hierarchically based which does not lend to managing emergent change in a constantly changing organisation with dynamic communication needs.

- ***Integrated approach is limiting*** – although the model does present a view of a communication process, the process itself is limited to the three specific types of communication (management, organisational and marketing) and is essentially isolated. Furthermore, the common starting points for communication are limited and do not focus specifically on internal communication and the role employees have in informing the communication process.
- ***The role of managers is isolated*** – Even though the model is “integrated”, it places the managers communication in isolation and not directly linked to internal communication. As change agents in maintaining communication, the managers roles in the process is essential to managing emergent change in modern organisations.

As presented in the history and development of internal communication, little has changed with regards to top-down communication and communication that is controlled by senior management and the company. Ruck and Yaxley (2013:4) add that even during the introduction of company magazines, these magazines were both funded and edited by the company and not exclusively driving by the workforce, suggesting that information that was shared and the content of these channels of communication were in fact controlled.

The next section of the literature will discuss internal communication channels, both from a systems perspective and the importance of “richness” and the degree to which a channel is able to transmit rich, complex and nuanced information that supports immediate feedback.

2.15.3 Internal Communication Channels

“There are no universal rules with regards to leading change. It involves linking action by people at all levels of the business”. Bamford and Forrester (2003:548).

A communication system is made up of different components such as communication channels and the usefulness of these channels in different situations. Suthers (2017:15) defines a communication system as a system that “involves people, the messages they wish to convey, the technologies that mediate conversations and the organisational structures that define and constrain the conversations that are allowed to occur”. Communication channels are defined as the “medium, mean, manner or method” through which a message is sent (Lumen, 2022:1). Without the channel to which a message is sent, a communication process or event would not be successful. Furthermore, choosing the right channel to communicate is of equal importance as the right message through the wrong channel could lead to misunderstanding and confusion.

Communication channels are categorized into two distinct types: formal and informal. Additionally, how information flows between these channels are further categorized into vertical, horizontal and diagonal communication. Both categories of channels (formal and informal) are equally dependent on the flow of communication (vertical, horizontal and diagonal) and can affect the efficiency of communication especially when using internal communication as a resource for managing emergent change. The choice of channels that an organisation uses depends on many variables, such as the size of the organisation, the technology available, the culture of the organisation and equally the culture of the employees. According to Lee (1998:182), communication channels within an organisation are categorized into two channels: written; and oral. Table 2.3 below offers examples of each of these two channels.

Written	Oral
Traditional Forms	Traditional Forms
Letters; Memos; Brochures; Reports; Manuals; Posters; Bulletin boards; Newsletters	Face-to-face; Telephone calls
Electronic Forms	Electronic Forms
Email; Website; Intranet; Blog; Instant messaging (What's App); Social Media (Facebook, Instagram)	Video conferencing (Zoom, Microsoft Teams); Podcast; Social media (Facebook, Instagram)

Table 2.3 – Written and Oral Communication channels adapted by Lee (2022:3-4)

With communication types referring to the way in which we communicate, communication channels refer to the medium or channel we use to deliver the message. Regardless of the type of communication we need to use, it is still essential that the right channel is used to ensure that the message is understood and received successfully. For example, if the Managing Director needs to communicate to staff that they are proceeding with retrenchments, using informal channels to spread the news would not only be unsuccessful but could result in additional employee problems, especially if the process is detailed orientated, communicating face-to-face via informal channels would lead to a “broken down telephone” process of facts and information being left out, communicated incorrectly and the message being completely different from the original message. Technology has now given us the opportunity of being “face-to-face” even when we are not physically together and *mediated communication* ⁵via communication technologies such as Zoom or MS Teams.

⁵ Mediated communication is communication that is sent through some sort of information communication technology DZIAK, M. 2020. Mediated communication. Salem Press.

Dziak (2020:1) defines mediated communication as “the exchange of ideas or information using some sort of communication technology”. Even though technology has advanced in leaps and bounds with regards to digital technology and Industry 4.0, even a simple paper and pen or radio broadcast are seen as a type of mediated communication. However, technological advances and social media have allowed people at the click of a button to share information with millions of other people, even to a point where interaction is possible. Instagram or Facebook, for example, has a live feature that allows for two-communication, where someone can stream a live video and people can ask questions in the comment feed. According to UpGrad (2022:1) written and oral communication types “need to (be) identified and used effectively for achieving maximum impact and richness of information as desired”.

2.15.3.1 Channel Richness: Media Richness Theory

Within the study of communication channels and before proceeding with the introduction of formal and informal channels, channels are often categorized into two types: rich or lean. The focus on the medium was first developed by Canadian educator and philosopher, Marshall McLuhan in the 1960’s who coined the term, “the medium is the message” and the “global village” (McLuhan, 1966:298). Communication channel richness holds significance in framing the objectives of the study and determining communication efficiency, especially with using internal organisational communication as a resource or tool to manage emergent change.

Communication channel richness is defined by Alice and Albert (2005:230) as “the extent to which media have the ability to overcome different frames of reference, clarify ambiguous issues and thus facilitate understanding between communicating individuals”. As new technology has developed, so too has the theories around channel richness developed with technology and social changes. Houry (2011:234) adds that technology is only a catalyst for change but the pace of change is still determined by the humans using the technology.

For this research and framing the importance and impact the use of different channels have on efficiently communicating during emergent change, the researcher will be using

the Media Richness Theory as a framework. The researcher acknowledges the more recent theories such as Mohan Dutta-Bergman's (2004) *Channel Complementarity Theory* and Caroline Haythornwaite (2005) *Media Multiplexity Theory*. However, these theories will not be included as they fall outside the scope of the research aim and objectives (Ruppel *et al.*, 2017).

Inspired by the increase in electronic communication in the mid-1980's, the Media Richness Theory (MRT) was first developed by scholars, Richard Daft and Robert Lengel. Kumi *et al.* (2019:124) state that "the theory suggests the effective use of communication channel (medium) by matching the richness of a medium and the equivocality⁶ of task". The theory focused on two significant characteristics when it comes to the successful processing of information. These two characteristics are uncertainty and equivocality. There is a clear difference between these two characteristics where uncertainty has to do with the lack of information, while equivocality concerns the lack of understanding. Kumi *et al.* (2019:124) add that uncertainty is the lack of information reduced by the quantity and the amount of information whereas equivocality is the lack of understanding because of lack of richness of information.

Daft and Lengel (1986:557) see these two forces; namely, uncertainty and equivocality as complementary forces and are framed according to the amount of change in an organisation. Figure 2.17 presents Daft and Lengel (1986:557) hypothesized framework of equivocality and uncertainty on information requirements and how these forces (uncertainty and equivocality) have value in processing information during change and how each of these forces can have a different impact on the outcome of behaviour because of the amount of information available during change.

⁶ The lack of understanding as a result of quality or richness of the information provided KUMI, I., LYONS, M. & CARR, S. 2019. Revisiting media richness theory for today and future. *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*, 1, 124-131.

EQUIVOCALITY	High	1. High Equivocality, Low Uncertainty Occasional ambiguous, unclear events, managers define questions, develop common grammar, gather opinions.	2. High Equivocality, High Uncertainty Many ambiguous, unclear events, managers define questions, also seek answers, gather objective data and exchange opinions.
	Low	3. Low Equivocality, Low Uncertainty Clear, well-defined situation, managers need few answers, gather routine objective data.	4. Low Equivocality, High Uncertainty Many, well-defined problems, managers ask many questions, seek explicit answers, gather new, quantitative data.
		Low	High
		UNCERTAINTY	

Figure 2.18 – Framework of equivocality and uncertainty on information requirements (Daft & Lengel 1986:557)

With high uncertainty resulting in a lack of information and high equivocality resulting in a lack of understanding, Daft and Lengel's (1986:557) framework presents the impact these forces have on the quality and quantity of information needed during change. For example, quadrant 2 refers to high equivocality and high uncertainty, where there is not only a lack of information available about the event or change but also a high lack of understanding and therefore confusion.

Information access as well as how to use that information by analyzing the information requirements of a situation as presented above (Figure 2.18), is central to the MRT. This same principle equally forms part of the Chaos Theory. From a Chaos Theory perspective and application, information is critical in dealing with complexity and changes, also known as the butterfly effect and bifurcation. Access to information and analyzing information requirements is critical, especially during a bifurcation point or when managers need to deal with changes. As presented in Section 2.2.2.3 (a- i) and Table 2.2, there are three views of dealing with complexity as proposed by Theodoridis (2009:101-104) that specifically include access to information and the amount of information available during change. These views have a significant impact on the efficiency of internal communication within an organisation. In brief, these three views are as follows:

- *Complexity reduction* – managers reduce connections and increase control by reducing the amount of information and choices available to employees.
- *Complexity absorption* – managers acknowledge information as important in change but focus is on the flow of information and not necessary what caused the change.
- *Complexity adaption* – this adaption process sees both managers and staff in a process of co-evolving to gather information to change behaviour and adapt to change.

According to the MRT, you need to be able to identify the situation to be able to choose the right channel for the situation to meet the communication and information requirements. From the view of the Chaos Theory, how managers deal with complexity (reduction, absorption or adaption) determines not only what channel they will use to communicate but also the amount of information that is communicated and the richness of the information. Therefore, you could have the right message but if you read the situation incorrectly and use the wrong channel, it could reduce the understanding (equivocality) of the information. For example, if the Human Resources Manager (HR) had the task of communicating to staff that they would be put on short time due to the company not performing well and that the aim of the message delivery was to equally communicate that the organisation is sincerely sorry, sending out an email would impact the messages equivocality.

With email being low in information richness and not being able to communicate non-verbal cues and provide immediate feedback, staff might perceive the company as “not caring” and could result in low morale and affect productivity. However, if the HR manager chose to have a face-to-face meeting where staff could see non-verbal cues, such a facial expression that communicate empathy and sadness, as well as can ask questions and provide immediate feedback, the messages equivocality is substantial reduced. This view additionally emphasizes the importance managers play in the communication process and their role as change agents in managing emergent changes and using internal communication as a resource. Furthermore, managers as change agents not only need to read the situation but also need to decide regarding the communication channel that

will be used and the context and content of the message. Wheatley (1993:8) suggests that “chaos is a state of information richness” and information is essential to self-organisation.

Although the MRT proposes a theory regarding the importance of information to reduce ambiguity and confusion, it has come under criticism. Dennis and Valacich (1999:2) criticize the MRT on the following basis:

- *“Media is not monolithic”* - one medium could have different communication capabilities. For example, email can be text-only but you can also attach or provide a link for a video.
- *Media cannot be ranked* – Daft and Lengel (1986) ranked media according to their richness, for example, face-to-face communication according to their model is ranked high in richness. However, context is not considered. For example, you could have a face-to-face communication with someone but if you do not speak their language and do not understand them not only will the channel not be information rich but the message would also not be understood.

Although the MRT has been criticized by many authors (Dennis and Valacich, 1999:131, Kumi *et al.*, 2019:124, Sheer, 2020) in terms of not being applicable to modern day technology and inadequate in predicting media choice, it is the view of the researcher that the theory still has a place in framing communication during emergent change. Although the theory is limiting in many ways as discussed above, it does provide an adequate foundation and the model can still be used as a framework for emphasizing the ability and impact communication channels have in ensuring efficient communication. Kumi, Lyons and Carr (2019:131) agrees and concludes that MRT is a “landmark foundation of studies on continuously evolving communication technology and media use behaviour”.

2.15.3.2 *Internal Communication Types*

As presented above, communication channels refer to the specific platform used to transmit a message, whereas communication types refer to the different methods or modes of communication. Communication types specifically refers to the method of

message transmission and the type of information exchanged (Mohr and Nevin, 1990). There are various types of communication within an organisation, with each type having a significant impact on the efficiency of communication and therefore determining its effectiveness. The types of internal communication that will be discussed are as follows: Vertical Communication; Horizontal Communication; Diagonal Communication; Formal Communication and Informal Communication. These types of communication will be discussed and framed around their importance and role in managing emergent change within an organisation.

- **Vertical Communication**

Vertical communication refers to communication that occurs between hierarchical positions within an organisation. It is characterised by information that flows from higher levels in an organisation to lower levels. Baker (2007:7) confirms and states that "vertical communication occurs between hierarchically positioned persons and can involve both downward and upward communication flows". Although downward communication is effective and contributes to a successful organisation, there is debate on the traditional or classical approach to using downward communication as the predominant type of communication in an organisation (Schmitz, 2012). Although downward communication ensures that employees are aware of an organisation's objectives, policies, procedures and general work instructions, it does have many disadvantages and needs to be used strategically. According to Communication (2023:para. 1-4), these disadvantages include information overload, the lack of feedback, distortion of information, the lack of trust and lack of personalization. From the perspective of a *glocal* approach, downward communication has its limitations.

The findings from a study by Stevens and Hisle (1996:29) revealed that manager respondents indicated three issues with downward communication; namely: difficulty communicating through the "layers"; the lack of feedback from their own managers; and cross-cultural challenges. Furthermore, the study revealed that the message is often not received intact by staff at lower levels and the message does not relay the intended context. According to Baker (2007:7), upward communication, on the other hand,

although seen as important, very little is known about it. The author goes on to say that there are consistent findings that conclude that employee satisfaction is less with upward communication. Although upward communication is seen as important, organisational policies, structures, procedures and organisational culture determine the opportunity for upward communication and the general attitude staff have towards communicating upwards. Stevens and Hisle (1996:30) study revealed the following challenges with upward communication:

- Upward communication is less frequent and is generally initiated by questions by management.
- Staff feel far removed from management where they believe their feedback is unimportant.
- Staff believe their message changes as it goes up the hierarchy and loses context.

However, upward communication can offer managers and executives insightful information and feedback that can aid in their decision-making and support the firm as a whole. From a systems perspective and the Chaos Theory, upward communication is what defines internal organisational communication as presented in Section 2.15.1. Internal Organisational Communication needs to be a transaction between individuals at all levels, with the intention of coordinating day-to-day activities (Welsch and LaVan, 1981:1245). Therefore, a feedback loop is required. Upward communication ensures there is a feedback loop.

- **Horizontal Communication**

Horizontal communication, also known as lateral communication, is communication between members in an organisation that are not related to each other with regards to hierarchal relations. It is communication between employees at the same level within the organisation, in other words, at the same hierarchical level (Juneja, 2022:para. 2-4). Horizontal communication occurs between employees that are in different functional areas as well as geographical locations. With a trend to flatten organisational structures and move towards more horizontal communication, Baker (2007:12) suggests that

amongst employees horizontal communication is less problematic, especially in the functional areas.

Within the concept of systems and particularly the Chaos Theory, the interconnectedness of systems and sub-systems places horizontal communication within a critical role of facilitating change between these sub-systems. Emergent change variables indicate the importance of the free flow of information and the impact of changes in systems that are interrelated. As stated by Lundberg (1990:693) with communication being the binding element that connects the various sub-systems together, horizontal communication is therefore essential to these subsystems functioning efficiently.

- **Diagonal Communication**

Diagonal communication, also known as cross-functional communication, is between managers and employees in different functional divisions. This type of communication was a response to matrix or project based organisational structures. According to Juneja (2022:para. 4-5), diagonal communication does not consider hierarchical levels and is usually informal. This type of communication is crucial for work coordination, problem-solving and information sharing amongst various departments or levels of an organisation. Furthermore, from a systems point of view the interrelatedness of a system means that communication cannot be just restricted to vertical or horizontal communication. According to Namhata and Patnaik (2019:13) and Men (2012:6-7), diagonal communication is beneficial from a systems perspective in that it is cross functional and connects the various sub-sections informally and reduces distortion and misinterpretation by not limiting the flow of information. However, the author goes on to posit that the disadvantages include “ego issues” due to diagonal communication breaching lines of authority and is generally verbal and therefore with limited accountability.

- **Formal Communication**

Formal communication channels are defined as the official communication channels through which information is shared (Angelopulo and Steinberg, 2015:268). This could be instructions via a manual, a message on a notice board or even a WhatsApp message

on the company's official WhatsApp group. There are multiple formal platforms and channels that management use to communicate with staff, from traditional forms such as emails and telephones to the Intranet, Skype, Zoom, WhatsApp, Messenger and social media to name but a few. According to Chow (2019:para. 12), communication in modern organisations is far more fragmented than it used to be in the past. Channels are more interactive, omnidirectional and are in real-time, but they do not come without risk. With more and more digital channels of internal communication being used in organisations, communication is becoming decentralized. However, having multiple models of communication and multiple channels of internal communication has various challenges, including the loss of context while a message is communicated in various ways. It also relies on the interpretation by the individuals as well as the organisational structure and who has access to these digital channels. According to Kovaité *et al.* (2020), Industry 4.0 “emphasizes the diffusion between physical and virtual lives”. This is driven by these new technologies that are internet-based and are driving a more collaborative process of communication. However, the question that needs to be asked is do employees have access to these channels and to what extent? The introduction of new communication channels and forms of distributing information are usually planned and developed at top-level, which leads to the belief that they are still controlled and planned.

Asif and Sargeant (2000:314) state that with change happening so frequently in modern organisations that the primary source of information comes from formal communication. However, it is the view of the researcher that formal communication is something that is planned for in most organisations and therefore as much as digital and Industry 4.0 “compatible” technologies are introduced in organisations are they being used at all levels? Although digital communication is mostly synchronous and traditional forms of communication such as email and notice boards being asynchronous, each have their own advantages and disadvantages. From the perspective of managing emergent change and in using internal communication as a tool to maintain this change, the researcher analyses the different formal platforms of both synchronous and asynchronous communication channels and platforms and the relevance of this communication to the objectives of the study.

	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	ORGANISATION UNDER STUDY
Email	Email is convenient and efficient. It can reach a broad audience. Access is also a benefit as people can now access emails from their mobile devices and remotely.	Cannot convey complicated, delicate information for the purpose of persuading and influencing. The message is not received instantly and feedback is not instant as well – and there is little engagement. It also relies on access to this platform as most lower levels staff do not have a company email address. According to Sinclair (2021:1) email is one of the most “overused and abused” communication channels in an organization.	Not all employees in the organisation have an email address (Holmes 2021:1).
Intranet/Website	The intranet or internal website does bring all information into one place where employees can access the information. It can share knowledge across	Employees need to actively seek the information as well as keep information up to date.	The organisation under study has a website where information is uploaded. The website is only available to managers. Managers then take this information and share

	departments and is easy to keep up to date.		it with the staff via face-to-face communication or distribution of hard copies (Crookes, 2021:1).
Print	Messages can be clear and in line with company branding. Print can include brochures and posters.	One way communication for the purpose of disseminating information. It also relies on the level of education of employees and whether they can understand the message and the context. Because the communication is one way, there is no way of the sender effectively determining if the message was in fact understood.	Communication to staff members is distributed generally by hard copies (Crookes 2021:1).
Face-to-face meetings	These meetings can be adhoc or scheduled. They allow for two-way communication, feedback and engagement.	They rely on both parties to be able to read verbal and non-verbal cues and have an understanding of individual cultural preferences.	

Video Conferencing	There is instant feedback as well as the ability to still read non-verbal communication cues. It is convenient and allows for people to communicate remotely.	Not all staff have access to video conferencing and it is a channel that is often reserved for management. Therefore, it does little in engaging employees across all levels.	
Notice Boards	It can be targeted and visual displays are often eye catching. They are always in a central place where employees can access the information.	They do little to offer two-way communication and thus do not offer an opportunity for engagement and feedback and are often outdated as content is not updated.	
Town-Hall Meetings/All Employee meetings	It brings all employees together and feels more personalized as staff can hear management talk.	It is time consuming to organize and costs the company operational costs due to down time. This can also lead to information overload.	

Table 2.4 - Formal platforms of both synchronous and asynchronous communication channels and platform (Sinclair, 2021:1)

Although digital platforms offer opportunities for quicker access to information for staff, it still heavily relies on the development of that message. For communication to be successful it must be understood by both parties and as discussed in Section 4.4.2 and 4.4.3, perception plays a critical role in this understanding as well as the communicators' level of cultural competency. Often there is emphasis on what channels are being used, however, it is the view of the researcher that more focus needs to be placed on the context of the message. A message might be "successful" and efficiently delivered from a channel point of view but if the message from a context point of view is ambiguous or lacks information the message will not be understood thus making the interaction unsuccessful.

- **Informal Communication**

Informal communication is often referred to as the "grapevine" and refers to informal channels or "unofficial" channels used to share information (Angelopulo and Steinberg, 2015:268, Cleary, 2015) . Organisations are made up of different systems of communication, modes, tools and channels. However, informal communication is often an understated network where managers underestimate the power of this channel. According to Johnson *et al.* (1994) informal communication channels are perceived more highly and seen as more credible. This could hold an opportunity for managers in managing emergent change in that information is efficiently retrieved from informal sources and that information being credible could provide a manager with up-to-date, relevant information that can be used to make informed decisions on change. Baker (2007:7) agrees and states that informal communication is no longer viewed as a hindrance within a modern organisation.

With formal communication channels, information flows from official channels such as emails, the intranet and noticeboards to employees. Through interpersonal communication amongst employees, employees share and exchange information that was sent through these formal and official channels. According to Men (2012), informal communication is often inaccurate and based on suggested opinions, however, employees perceive it to be more authentic than formal channels. In a study done by Sehhat *et al.* (2012:2369-2371) the authors research presented that there is a direct link

between leadership styles and informal relationships with employees. The authors state that within the perspective of communication that “having a good informal relationship play important roles on increasing efficiency”. Their study concluded that there is a direct link between an increased level of leadership and a decreased level of informal relationship with employees. As stated above, informal communication is important in operational efficiency. Informal forces within an organisation that are hard to control and change, such as informal communication and cultural norms, combined with formal forces such procedures and formal communication are often seen as two separate variables that cannot be acquiescent. Magalhães (2009:4) states that formal forces are shaped and influenced by informal forces. In the organisational world, there are forces which are informal, enduring and hard to change (e.g. cultural norms) and others which are formal, often ephemeral and more amenable to adoption (e.g. processes, procedures and tasks). The latter are inevitably influenced and shaped by the former.

Therefore, it can be said that informal forces such as bottom-up communication should then inform a managers’ process of Systems Thinking and subsequently the process of strategic planning and not the other way around. For this reason, the presented literature suggests that managers should pay closer attention to the interrelatedness of the system, taking a “big picture” view of the communication narrative to better predict emergent changes and thus improve efficiencies. According to Singh (2017:11) “Internal communication is one of the most sensible variables in respect of organisational performance improvement” and how feedback directs behaviour, showing “that there is significant connectivity between productivity and communication”. Furthermore, informal communication has a significant role in the process of self-organisation and Stigmergy, where informal communication facilitation and indirect communication influences employee behaviour and their ability to self-organize. Informal communication is essential to structuring the information flow inside an organisation, in addition to its critical function in Stigmergy and self-organisation. Understanding the informal communication network is crucial to understanding the complex channels via which information flows inside the organisational structure.

2.15.4 Flow of Information

In framing the literature in this section, the researcher will first define the difference between information and communication. These terms are often used interchangeably, but communication consists of active interaction between the sender and the receiver while information is an isolated action. Moore (2014:1) adds that “giving information is a one-way process; communication is two-way” process. Section 2.2.4.2 equally introduced the importance of the flow of information as a preceding communication and a basic human need.

From a sociocultural perspective, although information is necessary, for example sending out a notice to staff about a new product (one-way communication), communication is what determines the level of understanding and interaction. For example, management can send out a notice about a new product but feedback and thus interaction is required for managers to ascertain the level of understanding, be able to answer questions and as well as get buy in from employee, especially for employees who are actively involved such as salespeople that would sell the product and even factory staff who would make the product.

With communication guiding behaviour and coordinating activities within an organisation, how communication flows within the organisation is a determining factor in the success of the communication process. Traditionally, communication flow was vertical and horizontal, with communication going up and down the lines of authority. Simpson (1959:188) states that from this traditional view, “instructions move down, information moves up”. Even in modern organisations and the evolution of communication, downward communication is still very prevalent. Larkin and Larkin (1994) suggest that old management practices still prefer to use predominately downward communication and view upward communication and diagonal communication as being problematic.

Lateral and diagonal communication are often confused as being the same thing where the term is used interchangeably. However, as defined they are distinctly different and equally hold significant differences in the role of communication in managing emergent change. Within the framework of this study and the Chaos Theory, diagonal

communication relates to the interdependency of systems and how each department and thus each employee is interrelated. According to Baker (2007:7), with the recent trends to flatten organisational hierarchy, diagonal communication has become a central focus but is still, however, lagging in research. Organisational hierarchy and structure are a central determining factor in the flow of communication within an organisation as communication policies and procedures often guide how communication flows and reporting channels.

2.15.4.1 Impact of organisational hierarchy on the flow and role of internal organisational communication

According to Johnson (2019:para. 1-5), the flow of communication within an organisation is often governed by an organisations' culture and structure. However, the paradox arises that often the organisations' culture is determined by senior management. Therefore, communication flow is informed by decisions of senior management and not formulated on input from employees at lower levels. Regardless of the organisations structure, be it hierarchical, functional, horizontal, divisional, matrix, team-based or network, communication is the central activity that determines the success of an organisation. Jakubiec (2019:3) agrees and states that "communication is the element that maintains and sustains relationships" in an organisation.

With individuals in various levels of the hierarchy as custodians of communicating information within an organisation, the role of these custodians becomes an important concept within the flow of information within the organisation. This assumes that there is a blurred line between communication and internal communication. As defined in Section 2.4.2, internal communication is not very different to communication in general and they are both merely transactions that take between people, where a message is sent, received and interpreted in a dynamic process. In both processes, communication is goal orientated. Be it to share information or give instructions, both types result in an outcome.

Organisational structure and hierarchy determine "who does what" when it comes to communication. The literature assumes that internal communication is managed by certain people and where the function sits. For example, according to Smith and Mounter

(2005:47-53) internal communication is usually a function of Public Relations, Human Resources or Marketing Departments. Van Riel (1995) similarly proposes that internal communication is only a function of strategic managers. However, it is the view of the researcher that although these functions work effectively for planned internal communications strategies, managing emergent change needs change management that “maintains” internal communication at various levels of management and supervisors across the organisation. Not in just a single role and within predetermined flows of communication, such as upward or downward communication. Furthermore, the structure and flow of communication has a significant impact on how rich the information is and how it can reduce uncertainty and increase understanding. Section 2.3.3 discussed the role managers play as change agents in managing emergent change.

This section presented research done by Locomote (2021:1) that displays how employees are less informed of change the further down the hierarchy. Internal communication is pivotal in the role of communicating change, making information flow to employees critical. Management of emergent change from a single role in the hierarchy, for example a change management manager or Public Relations manager is one person or the role falls into that department. Systems Thinking and emergent change is dynamic and interrelated. It is impossible for an individual or single department to manage emergent change in each department in isolation or over the organisation. This practice is counterintuitive and places too much importance on a single person or small group of people in what is essentially an integrated organisation.

Section 2.15.3.1 presented the Media Richness Theory and the impact the two forces of uncertainty and equivocality have on the quantity of information and understanding of information respectively. Daft and Lengel (1988:559) explain that organisational structure is responsible for the facilitation of communication and interaction and thus can reduce uncertainty and reduce equivocality or confusion within an organisation. The flow of information within an organisation is largely determined by the type of channel used to communicate in each situation and equally relies on the decision employees make in that situation with regards to the channel they use to communicate. This is further impacted by the policies and procedures of reporting roles on this flow of information. For example,

if a company's policy is that all concerns and complaints need to be in writing and emailed to Human Resource Department, could result in both uncertainty and equivocality. Email as a channel is low in information richness, practically speaking, the employee would not be able to communicate information rich data such as non-verbal cues (sadness, disappointment or despair) or if the employee was not fluent in English would not be able to provide the HR Department with the amount of information and detail needed to completely understand the complaint.

From this perspective, organisational hierarchy and those policies and procedures that guide the flow of information and communication have a substantial effect on reducing uncertainty and confusion within an organisation and its departments. This suggests that fostering dynamic, two-way communication is led by key senior people but is still, however, a process that needs to involve all members within an organisation in a symmetrical process. Symmetrical internal communication fosters successful organisations through a process of participative, two-way communication. Organisational structures can have a detrimental effect on the choice of communication flow and process within an organisation. Grunig *et al.* (1999:40) presents the view that asymmetrical communication is often a result of mechanical and centralized structures, where management is controlling and limits the decision-making and participation of employees.

However, it is a process that needs to involve all members within an organisation in a symmetrical process. Symmetrical internal communication fosters successful organisations through a process of participative, two-way communication. Organisational structures can have a detrimental effect on the choice of communication flow and process within an organisation. Grunig *et al.* (1999:40) presents the view that asymmetrical communication is often a result of mechanical and centralized structures, where management is controlling and limits the decision-making and participation of employees.

2.16.5 Intercultural communication: sociocultural view of internal organisational communication in managing emergent change

“One way to understand communication is to view it a people process rather than language process. If one is to make fundamental improvements in

communication, he must make changes in interpersonal relationships.”
Gibb (1965:221).

As presented in Chapter 2 and specifically, Section 2.2.3.4, sociocultural factors are one of the foundations of Systems Thinking and are directly related to self-organisation within the concept of the Chaos Theory. Sociocultural view simply includes the combination of both social and cultural behaviours, views and beliefs of people and within an organisational perspective, the social and cultural factors that influence employee decision making, communication and behaviour, to name a few (CambridgeDictionary, 2022).

The objective and focus of this research is on a *glocal* perspective to manage emergent change with internal communication as a resource. This section of the literature will frame the literature under the umbrella field of intercultural communication and specific factors that contribute to the impact cultural and social factors have on emergent change and on internal communication. The literature will be incorporated and framed within various sociocultural effects such as the impact of digitization; South African culture perspective; cultural competence and cultural intelligence of managers; and the impact of shared meaning. Additionally, an organisations culture or corporate culture is a determining factor in the way people communicate as it can guide policy and procedures on communication channels and flow within the organisation. As a transaction or interaction, internal communication from a symmetrical viewpoint, facilitates successfully and efficiently the managing of emergent change in modern organisations. From this perspective, for a transaction or interaction to be successful, communication needs to have context, be understood by both parties and have shared meaning in order to be sustainable.

As a result of the diverse nature of modern organisations, we interact in what is referred to as a “global village⁷”. There are various theories and views on communication and culture, such as intercultural, multicultural and cross-cultural communication (Schriefer, 2016). Although these views on culture and communication are under the same field of study, they are substantially different, especially within the context of this research.

⁷ A world that is viewed where individuals are no longer distant nor isolated as a result of technology and electronic media MERRIAM-WEBSTER 2022c. Global Village. Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

Schriefer (2016:1) agrees that “while they all might be under the same roof, they describe entirely different rooms”. The key terms and concepts surrounding communication and concerned with culture need to be clearly defined within the context of this research. There are three distinct types of cultural communication; namely: multicultural; cross-cultural and intercultural. These types are defined and tabled below:

Cultural Communication Type	Description
Multicultural	A society or organisation that is made up of different cultural or ethnic groups. However, from an interaction point of view, these groups do not necessarily interaction with each other.
Cross-cultural	This communication type often has a dominant culture where all other cultures are compared to. The differences between the dominant culture and the other cultures might be understood and acknowledged but often does not lead to collective change or transformation.
Intercultural	A more dynamic interaction that focuses on mutual exchange and shared understanding.

Table 2.5 – Cultural Communication types adopted from Schriefer (2016:1)

As tabled above (Table 2.5), intercultural communication from the point of dynamic exchange and shared meaning, frames the objectives of this study, especially within the framework of the Chaos Theory for managing emergent change. The researcher acknowledges different types of cultural communication types as tabled above (Table 2.5). However, for the purpose of this research, the researcher will present intercultural communication as part of the literature and study. Intercultural communication is defined as “communication between people who belong to different cultures and who thus have different values, beliefs, behaviours and ways of communicating (Cleary, 2015:10). Due to globalization and cultural diversity⁸, it is a norm to work in an organisation that has

⁸ “Diversity refers to the presence of people who, as a group, have a wide range of characteristics, seen and unseen, which they were born or have acquired. These characteristics may include their gender

cultural differences. According to Harris and Moran (1999:29), it was assumed that cultural differences were often a barrier within an organisation that challenged the status quo and that the more cultural differences there were, the greater the barrier to communication and interaction. de Guzman *et al.* (2016:1) agrees and adds that “despite the fact that societies are becoming more culturally diverse and globalized, issues surrounding inequality, bias and breakdowns in intercultural communications persist”.

Communication within this perspective is seen as a transaction and interaction. A key component for an interaction to be successful is based on the understanding between the parties communicating and the dynamic exchange of information between them. Harris and Moran (1999:29) adds that:

An individual's self-image, needs, values, expectations, goals, standards, cultural norms and perceptions have an effect on the way input is received and interpreted...Communication, then, is a complex process of linking up and sharing perceptual fields between sender and receiver.

From a holistic point of view, communication occurs when someone assigns meaning to another person's words or actions. This places importance on the individual and the meaning that is assigned to words and actions and the interaction thereof. An individual's culture plays a huge role in the way assigned meaning is placed on these interactions. Moodley and Ponono (2020:6) explain that “we must be aware of the tension between a person as an individual and the fact that they are grounded within a complicated social structure”. Communication in essence, is a progression that brings together the individual and social structure in a dynamic process and determines how people interpret messages. Communication from an organisational view is seen as a dynamic exchange of information between the parties involved in the transaction or interaction. For this transaction to be successful, the information that is shared needs to be understood both ways. Thus, the process itself largely depends on how effective both parties understand each other with everyone's culture impacting this process.

identity, race or ethnicity” DELOITTE 2020. The right mind-set: Approaching diversity and inclusion in South Africa Value Beyond Compliance series. *Approaching D&I in South Africa - The SA context and diversity gap*. Johannesburg: Deloitte.

Creating meaning within the context of sociocultural view is a dynamic process. Harris and Moran (1999:29) states how sharing ideas and information not only occurs at different levels but there is a constant process of updating meaning due to the different symbols different cultures use – “communication is the most important tool for getting things done”. We are being exposed to a vast amount of information daily and perception allows an individual to filter what they consider is important to them. Although this can be a convenient process to deal with large amounts of information, it can also be a hindrance from an internal communication point of view and information flow between departments and individuals in an organisation.

Organisational hierarchy has a substantial impact on the flow of communication within an organisation. Therefore, often key people in an organisation, such as managers who are in decision-making positions are influenced by their own cultural influences, beliefs and perceptions. These factors ultimately influence the way in which they communicate, including the channels used. According to Patrick (2018b), culture is a system of shared meaning. While it is important to recognize the value of developing common meaning within cultural contexts, the researcher also wants to emphasize how communication is a fundamental and universal need for all people, regardless of race or gender.

2.16.5.1 Transcending Race and Gender: Communication as a Basic Human Need

The act of communication transcends cultural barriers and reflects our innate desire to connect, share and exchange information with others, whether it takes the form of emails, spoken language or nonverbal clues. The Shannon-Weaver Model of Communication introduced in Section 2.2.4, emphasises the underlying human need for communication and the underlying human drive to communicate is highlighted by this paradigm. Thomas and McDonagh (2013:1) agrees and suggests one of our most fundamental human needs is satisfied by communication and the capacity for self-expression. What is important to note is that although culture plays an important role in communication, communication in its basic form, such as the flow of communication and simply depicted in Shannon-Weavers model, is a basic human need and transcends both race and gender. A final report presented by UNESCO and quoted in Commerce (1980) states that it is a “universally acknowledged principle that information is an essential part of a nation's

resources and access to it is one of the basic human rights". Shared meaning can only happen when the process of information being transferred has occurred, in essence communication. This acts as a reminder that communication is a fundamental human need that exists independently of cultural and race interpretations. However, for there to be shared meaning which is collaborative, the fundamental importance is on the transfer of information.

2.16.5.2 Shared Meaning: Going beyond Information Sharing and Knowledge Sharing

Internal communication is informational and relational and concerns the sharing of information to achieve an objective. Although the process of communication includes sharing information, communication goes beyond just simply sharing that information. There not only needs to be information but as Poux-Berthe (2017:11) proposes, it has to be "relational" or created through social interaction. This leads to the importance of defining the difference between information and knowledge and subsequently, knowledge sharing and shared knowledge within an organisation. There needs to be a paradigm shift in the way organisations see information and knowledge. As explained by Braf (2002:72) "knowledge does not reside in books or in a database; those objects only contain *information*...knowledge is unquestionably related to human beings". From an organisational perspective, one can then assume knowledge does not reside in company policy and procedures, only information does.

Although the terms information and knowledge are used interchangeably, there is debate in defining each of them. However, there are differences as well as similarities proposed by numerous authors in the field. Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) propose similarities and differences as following: both are concerned with meaning, are context-specific and are created by a dynamic process of social interaction (relational). However, knowledge is about action. Conversely, Braf (2002:72) argues that both information and knowledge involve some sort of action. Regardless, both information sharing and knowledge sharing represent forms of communication and ultimately, focus is on the human side of this interaction.

As emphasized in this chapter, communication goes beyond just sending and receiving a message – there must be understanding and understanding occurs through interaction and shared meaning. As described by Homer (2008), shared meaning does not mean everyone has to believe in the same thing nor does it mean each person in the conversation shares what is meaningful to them. It is, however, an acceptance of each other's perspectives with the aim of exploring the context. Héon (2022:para. 5) adds that shared meaning is a collaborative process that involves collective ownership and knowledge. There is very limited literature on the discussion of shared meaning from an individual perspective on an on-going basis during symmetrical communication and subsequently, dynamic interaction. It has been established that both knowledge and information play critical roles in the communication process and Uyan (2020:423) states that knowledge-based organisations need to have agility to be able to adapt to constant changes within the organisation. Shared meaning is usually framed around the shared meaning of organisational culture or as a leadership concept. Uyan's (2020:423-442) research on shared meaning and organisational change emphasizes the importance of inclusive, shared meaning as opposed to centralized approaches. However, shared meaning is within the setting of organisational culture.

As presented in the above paragraph, context is a central focus to create shared meaning. The interrelated variables against the backdrop of context with regards to shared meaning is offered by Ford (2022) and Hill (2009). According to the authors, the following five variables must exist in communication for there to be shared meaning. These five variables are as follows: transaction; interaction; irreversible and unrepeatable; culture specific; and content and relationships. All these variables offered above cannot exist without human participation. Section 2.3.5.1 of the literature emphasized the importance of a "people centred view" when it comes to managing emergent change. A shared image needs to be achieved for there to be meaningful interactions. According to Gharajedaghi (2011:61) "human culture with all its complexity, ambiguity, and manifold potentialities stands at the centre of the process of change". The authors further add that a shared image or shared meaning is so deep-rooted that it ultimately affects individuals' behaviour and buy-in into the organisation. With shared meaning having the ability to affect a

person's behaviour, it is therefore, an important component in managing emergent change with internal organisational communication.

2.16.5.3 Impact of Digitization on Internal Organisational Communication in a Culturally Diverse Workforce

The fourth industrial revolution (4IR) or otherwise known as Industry 4.0, is somewhat of a buzz word of late with many organisations relooking at their communication channels to keep up with technology. Managing emergent change in modern organisations, considering new technologies is becoming increasingly fragmented. Section 2.5.2.1 presented communication channels, both formal and informal as well as digital channels. With the objectives of the study focusing on a *glocal* perspective as well as the presented impact sociocultural factors have on managing emergent change, this section of the literature focusses on the social and cultural impact digitization has on internal communication and essentially, intercultural communication.

Traditionally, face-to-face communication was seen as the only method of interpersonal communication. However, technological advancements and the introduction of computer mediated communication has introduced an element of interpersonal communication that is digital, where you do not have to be physically together to have interpersonal communication. Gustafsson *et al.* (2018:9) agree and states that the shift towards digital internal communication methods has created endless opportunities. For example, instant messaging service, WhatsApp, has been used now more than ever as a formal communication channel within organisations. From communicating job tasks, motivational messages, keeping staff informed about news or even as part of a Human Resource tool, WhatsApp has become a way to communicate with employees efficiently (Sweesh, 2021:para. 1-4). Conversely, the question that is often raised concerns the effectiveness of this channel of communication, especially from a sociocultural perspective. Venter (2019:1) states that “computer-mediated communication lacks traditional non-verbal cues, which may cause misunderstandings, influencing meaningful interpersonal communication”.

According to BusinessTech (2018:1) “global findings showed that face-to-face meetings and phone meetings are on the decline, while work collaboration platforms are on the rise. Their overall preference remains face-to-face and telephonic communication”. This finding has been even more relevant due to restrictions as a result of the COVID19 pandemic. On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 as a pandemic and on the 23rd March 2020, South African President, Cyril Ramaphosa, imposed the first lockdown⁹. Overnight, COVID19 and the national lockdown from a business perspective saw businesses having to change business models and a rethink on how to adjust operations under the lockdown restrictions, subsequently, meaning a move towards an increase in digitization. Work from home during the pandemic became a norm and with that brought about many social challenges, such as data access, managing staff remotely, increase in gender-based violence and challenges in family dynamics, to name a few (Radi, 2020, News24, 2022:para. 1-5). According to one of the Directors in the company under study, internal communication during the COVID19 only affected senior managers and the board, where Zoom meetings were initiated in place of the usual monthly face-to-face meetings (Holmes, 2021:1).

Undoubtedly, CMC is more efficient in communicating information to many people. However, the question is, is it effective from a sociocultural point of view? Although CMC has the ability to create a better human experience and mimic “face-to-face” communication, such as MS teams and the use of emoji’s ¹⁰ in text, Dziak (2020:1) suggests it “removes essential elements from the human experience.” Users are still physically isolated from each other and communication elements such as tone and non-verbal communication might not be effectively communicated. The researcher acknowledges the impact of these socio and economic challenges. However, for the purpose of this research in exploring the impact of internal communication in managing emergent change, the impact of COVID19 will be analyzed with regards to the impact it had on internal communication within the organisation. Furthermore, the organisation

⁹ "the imposition of stringent restrictions on travel, social interaction, and access to public spaces" as a result of the COVID19 pandemic BBC. 2020. Covid-19: 'Lockdown' declared Collins Dictionary word of the year. BBC.

¹⁰ A small icon, symbol or image used in electronic media to express an emotion MERRIAM-WEBSTER 2022b. Emoji. Merriam-Webster.

under study was classified as an essential service provider and was allowed to essentially operate during the lockdown. In framing the impact of digitization on internal communication from a sociocultural perspective, the following section of the literature sheds more insights from a South African culture perspective, lending towards framing a *glocal* approach by clearly defining the South African culture.

2.16.5.4 *South African Culture and Diversity Perspective*

“We are a nation truly defined by diversity.” News24 (2017: para.3)

South Africa is referred to as the “rainbow nation” because of its diversity in cultures. Just like a rainbow that constantly changes shape and form, as well as looks different from different angles, South Africa’s cultural diversity and landscape is equally dynamic and changes on a day-to-day basis. Both the history of South Africa’s culture and current landscape within the workplace significantly informs the need for an alternative view to incorporating the South African culture into internal communication processes to manage emergent change. To incorporate the South African culture, one needs to first be able to define it. In achieving one of the objectives of the study to explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes, clearly defining “South African culture” is paramount. With 12 official languages (including Sign language) and a population that is made up of a host full of cultures, there is only one word to describe South Africa’s culture - diverse. To define “the South African culture” one needs to understand the brief history of the country as its history is what has contributed to the current landscape and shaped the diversity that we see today.

South Africa has a history that includes autochthonous livelihoods, slavery, colonization, and liberation movements. The earliest natives to South Africa were the San and the Khoikhoi, who were later displaced by the Bantu-speaking people from Northwest Africa (Aliprandini, 2021). Although South Africa was only officially colonized by the Europeans in 1652, the country already had several migrations and invasions by different groups of

people. Oliver and Oliver (2017:7) state that South Africa is a unique example of colonization and migration. These are summarized below:

- 2000 years ago – black people groups from the north including south-eastern Bantu, Nguni, Sotho or Tswana, Tsonga, Venda and Lemba, to name a few, migrated to parts of South Africa. This was ended in 1880 when the British and Afrikaners came to power.
- 1652 – initially led by the Dutch from the Netherlands and which was brought to an end in 1806 when the British took over the country.
- 1806 – by Great Britain but their colonization came to an end in 1961 when South Africa became a Republic.
- 1948 – better known as the *apartheid* ¹¹when the country was segregated by the Afrikaners. This era officially ended in 1994 when South Africa became an official democracy.

The history of South Africa in terms of its colonization, as well as migrations that still occur, holds significance to this study in framing the extensive influence so many cultures have had on the country. Against this backdrop, clearly defining the “South African culture” in traditional, global terms is probabilistic. UNESCO (2009:9) defines culture as:

“As the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs”.

Like UNESCO’s definition, the Merriam-Webster (2022:1) defines culture as “the customary beliefs, social forms and material traits of a racial, religious, or social group”. Due to South Africa’s history of colonization and migration, South Africa’s culture is so unique that it cannot be clearly defined by a single value system, tradition or belief. From this perspective and considering South Africa’s diverse culture, the definitions offered by UNESCO and the Merriam-Webster Dictionary has many shortcomings. For example, if

¹¹ “The rigid system of total racial segregation” in South Africa during 1948 to 1994. The country’s population as divided into “whites”, “blacks” and “coloureds” LUCAS, E. T. 2022. Apartheid. Salem Press.

a visitor to South Africa had to ask a Zulu, Pedi or Indian what the nature of the South African culture is, their response would be significantly different as each culture has different customs, values and belief systems to mention a few (SAHO, 2022b). The various cultures that make up South Africa and South Africa's history with the apartheid segregation makes clearly defining culture from a South African viewpoint significantly contentious and suggests once again segregation based on race and culture. SAHO (2022:para. 1-5) agrees and states that "in South Africa, the question of definition according to race and culture carries an especially sharp edge to it" and for this reason there is no appropriate definition but the description of being "diverse". News24 (2017:1) agrees and states that "we are a nation truly *defined* by diversity".

Therefore, it can be concluded that the only way to describe or even define the South African culture is with the term "diverse". The significance of this term is so important to South Africa that it has been included in the official motto of South Africa, which is "Unity in Diversity" (Aliprandini 2021:para. 1-5) as well as in the South African Constitution (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 : as adopted on 8 May 1996 and amended by the Constitutional Assembly:1243):

"We, the people of South Africa, recognize the injustices of the past; honour those who suffered for justice and freedom in our land; respect those who have worked to build and develop our country; and believe that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, united by our diversity."

Having clearly "defined" what the South African culture is, the researcher would like to emphasize that for the purpose of this research the phrase "South African culture" refers not to a specific cultural group but to the notion that the South African culture is essentially defined as "diverse". It includes the various cultures, races and religions that make up the South African population and holds significance in the study of communication within the workplace.

Described as a “tapestry” of culture by SAHO (2022), South Africa’s culture, just like tapestry¹² is rich and complex – representing the diversity of the South African culture and equally the diversity within the workplace landscape. Added to this is the introduction of technology and access to information, even in rural areas, which has led to a mixing pot of cultures. Culture is no longer uniform and unaffected by other cultures. According to Mbembe (2001) post-colonial societies, from a communication point of view, are no longer one dimensional and individuals are influenced by multiple cultures leading to what the author refers to as an entanglement of cultures. Just like chaos, this entanglement lends to the view of a cultural landscape that constantly changes, where individuals are constantly being influenced by several cultures at any given time. This can, therefore, have an impact on employees’ interactions with management and supervisors and how the dynamics of emergent change are facilitated.

Emergent change is not the sum of actions but the product of day-to-day interactions. With emergent change occurring from the interactions of employees and members in a dynamic organisation, culture is expressed through these interactions. According to Booysen (2007:51) “in order to manage the diverse workforce effectively, managers need to understand cultural diversity and need to tailor make their management behaviour to suit the different contexts and people they are managing”. This view, which is offered by Booysen suggests a process of “managing” the diverse workforce and not the use of a theory. In line with the view of the researcher and considering the limitations of internal communication models presented in Section 2.15.2, these models are not efficient in managing emergent change against the background of culture, especially from a South African perspective.

From a South African perspective, Mehta (2019:19) states that in “non-western cultures, a person only exists in relationships”. As presented in the literature review, human interaction is not something that can be controlled or predicated. With organisations being so chaotic and non-linear, “managing” the people-element is a determining factor in how well emergent changes are managed and how managers manage employees’

¹² “a heavy handwoven reversible textile used for hangings, curtains, and upholstery and characterized by complicated pictorial designs” that is rich in design MERRIAM-WEBSTER 2022e. Tapestry. Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary. Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary.

relationships. With the South African cultural landscape being so diverse, there is a constant need to navigate and negotiate meaning during interactions. Moodley and Ponono (2020:6) explain that individuals are rooted into society and when they communicate, their culture are extensions that informs the communication process. Whitton (2021:1) as a journalist for SABC News, agrees and states that “many cultures have a tradition of patriarchy in leadership that to others simply seems outdated”. As a result of *glocalization*, South African organisations have had to reexamine the effectiveness of their organisational cultures in terms of being inclusive to a culturally diverse workforce. Vogt and Laher (2009:40-42) state that western cultures are predominantly individualist¹³, while African cultures are characterised by collectivism¹⁴. Therefore, the culture of the individual at senior management level has a significant impact on the development of a company’s corporate culture that is subsequently implemented at the collective level and across the organisation.

Diversity and inclusion are at the top of most organisation’s agendas around the world. Within South Africa, the government has implemented numerous legislations that were implemented to encourage transformation such as: *The Department of Trade and Industry’s B-BBEE Code of Good Practice*; *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*; *King Report on Governance of South Africa (King IV)*; as well as the *Employment Equity Act* Deloitte (2020:12). As suggested above, South Africa is still addressing post-colonial challenges with regards to the impact of culture and diversity on communication.

Gender is equally a prominent issue within the South African context and the marginalization of women within the societal framework has its roots in colonialism. According to Thornton (2022:5), even though women make up half of South Africa’s population, women only make up 20% to 29% of senior management in the South African workforce. More specifically to the study and the sample, Segal (2018:para. 4) adds that “like many industries, the motoring sector is a male-dominated one and there are gender-related challenges”. The underrepresentation of women within management and

¹³ Culture that describes the importance of individual needs above the groups needs CHERRY, K. 2020. Individualistic Cultures and Behavior. Available from: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-are-individualistic-cultures-2795273>.

¹⁴ Culture that emphasizes the importance of the group needs above the individuals. Relationship with other group members and interconnectedness is important. Ibid.

leadership roles in South Africa has a significant impact on diversity and therefore the ability of organisations to manage emergent change that is informed by traditional methods and processes. For this research, the researcher will be discussing diversity from the perspective of reinforcing intercultural communication and the impact organisational culture has on the communication climate thus, diversity and inclusion.

2.17 Communication Climate: Beyond Corporate Culture and Corporate Climate

Corporate culture was first introduced in 1962 by post-war management authors, Blau and Scott and was referred to as an “informal dimension” within the workplace. Thereafter, the field of corporate culture gained momentum with authors such as Pettigrew (1979), Pascale and Athos (1981), Deal and Kennedy (1982), Peter and Waterman (1982) and Sackmann (1991) all adding to the body of knowledge and the importance of corporate culture in management practices and workplace effectiveness (Wallace *et al.*, 1999:548-549). Today, corporate culture is the buzz word and many organisations invest a lot of money and resources into developing corporate culture and then on a continual basis reinforcing and communicating this corporate culture to employees. The definition of corporate culture is debated with two dominant views.

Eisenberg E (2001) view is that corporate culture is not defined by values but by practices. In contrast, Haviland (1993) defines culture as having shared values that guide the groups behaviour. Corporate culture is often developed by senior management and employees and then socialized into this “way of doing things” and essentially guide how you should “behave”. However, although corporate culture plays a significant role in guiding the framework for internal communication within the organisation, corporate culture is essentially written on paper and is a predetermined set of values and norms. Alvarez (2020:para. 3) agrees and states that a company’s mission and vision, perks and diversity initiatives, for example, make for good corporate culture on paper. Hobson (2018:1) states that organisational culture as a shared system is embedded into individuals and thus is challenging to change.

A subset of corporate culture is corporate climate. Often used interchangeably, there is a significant difference between the two. Martins and Von der Ohe (2003:42) offer the

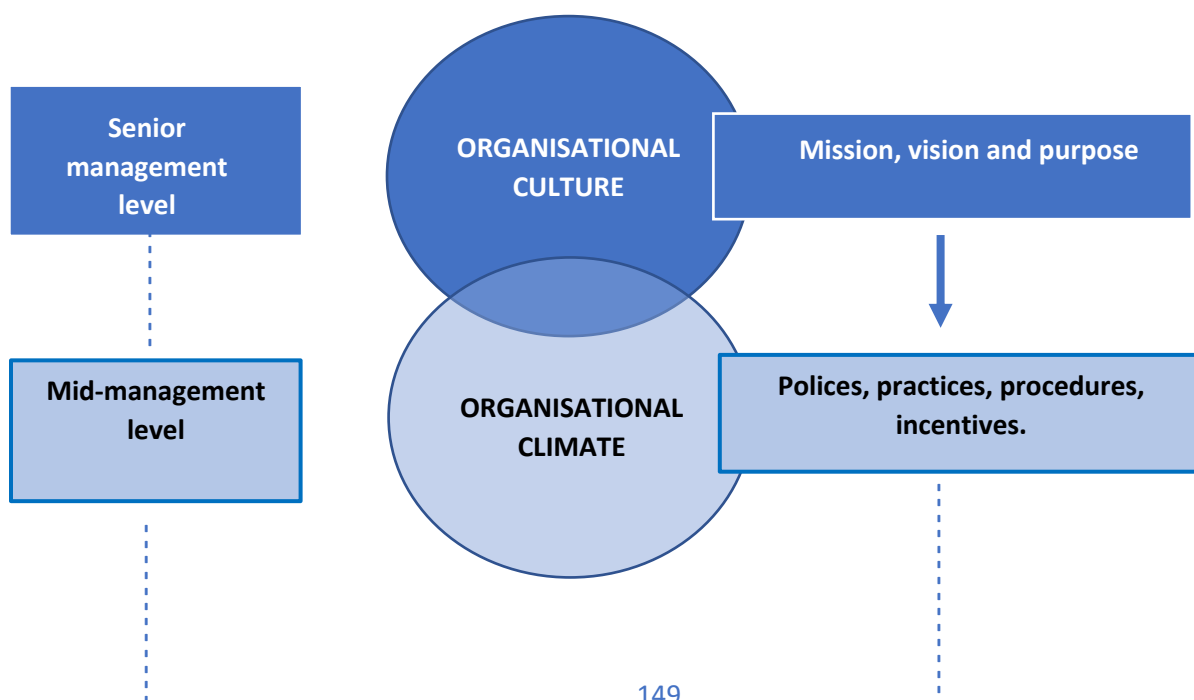
following deafferentation: “organisational climate is concerned with how employees perceive the characteristics of an organisation’s culture. In contrast to culture, which sets the boundaries of behaviour, climate directly influences behaviour within the organisation”. Hobson (2018:1) offers a relevant analogy in explaining the difference between organisational culture and climate and states that organisational culture is described as the organisation’s personality, while climate is the organisations mood. From this perspective one can view the impact each of these schools of thought has on internal communication and emergent change. A personality is something that is embedded in you and if it does change and evolve it happens over a long period of time. Whereas your mood is something that can change instantly depending on your environment and what happens around you - just like emergent change that is a dynamic process influenced by interactions.

Climate is held to be a summary perception of how an organisation deals with its members and environments and thus develops specifically from internal factors and interactions primarily under managerial influence. Lemmergaard (2017:1) adds to this definition and states that culture is “the deep structure of an organisation, rooted in relatively stable taken-for-granted values, beliefs and assumptions held by the organisations members,” whereas, climate is “rooted in the organisations policies, practices and procedures subject to direct managerial control”. Additionally, corporate climate is rooted in the company’s value system that is framed by the organisations culture and therefore subject to direct control.

The corporate climate as suggested above, is defined by numerous factors, including policies, practices and procedures which aim to standardize processes within an organisation. From an internal communication perspective, the researcher acknowledges the importance of policies, practices and procedures in maintaining consistency, especially from an operational point of view. However, these factors can be hindered from the perspective of managing emergent change with internal communication as they are subject to control, often inflexible and are not able to be changed without following protocols, which all take time. Ross (2012:para. 10-14) highlights the following challenges with policies, practices and procedures in guiding communication:

- They are usually written by senior management which results in the language of the document often being difficult to understand for certain staff members.
- Adjusting the document is not a priority for those that wrote the document (senior managers).
- It usually passes on the “how” but not the “why” and fails to add context to why something should be done in a certain way.

With change occurring so frequently within a modern organisation and the evident critical importance of communication in managing emergent change, it could then be said that predetermined communication policies, practices and procedures within an organisation’s climate might be ineffective in managing emergent change from an internal communication point of view. While organisational climate reflects the values, norms and behaviours of employees with regards to organisational attributes, communication climate on the other hand includes a combination of human behaviour, interaction with other employees and perceptions regarding internal communication structures and processes (Ayundhasurya and Kurniawan, 2017:141). Communication climate is essentially the “real-time” or live perceptions of employees regarding the organisational climate and subsequently, the organisational culture. The figure below (2.19) presents the relationship and interdependence of organisational culture, organisational climate and communication climate.



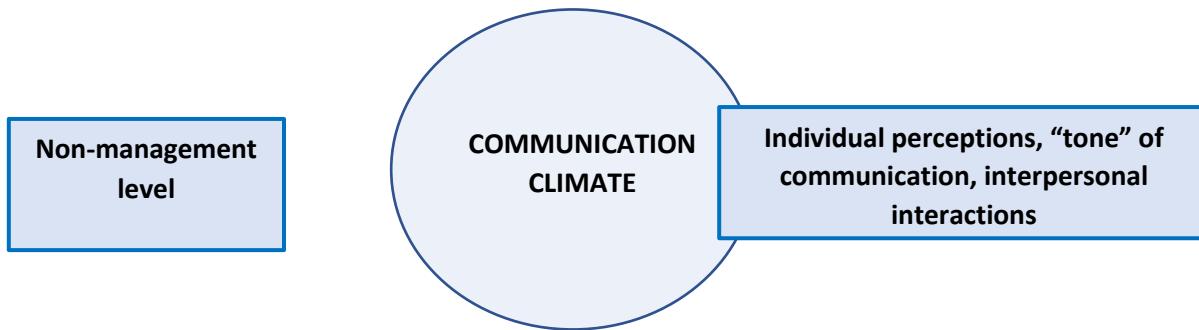


Figure 2.19 – Framework of organisational culture, organisational climate and communication climate adapted from Martins and Von der Ohe (2003:42), Ayundhasurya and Kurniawan (2017:141)

The above Figure 2.19 presents the relationship of organisational culture, organisational climate and communication climate and has presented the clear definitions and differences between these factors. What is important to note is that these factors are essentially driven by different levels of management as described earlier and is therefore, informed by hierarchy. Martins and Von der Ohe (2003:42) agree and add that even when it comes to organisational climate, to which the level of autonomy is a determining factor in its development, that it is essentially influenced by the structure and hierarchy in an organisation that determines who has what power. Whereas communication climate is driven by the individual level and essentially cannot be exclusively controlled by management or structures. Communication climate offers an alternative view to managing emergent change with internal communication, essentially from a maintenance point of view. The researcher will be framing the importance of communication climate and its role in managing emergent change in the next section.

2.17.1 Constructs of Communication Climate

Communication climate was developed by Charles Redding in 1972, who according to Buzzanell and Stohl (1999:324) is known for his legacy and role in leading paradigm shifts within the study of communication. Before this period, internal communication was simply industrial communication and presentation and the shift in the focus of communication and human progress as Redding referred to it was the start of a shift in thinking and the importance of communication within the organisation. Welsch and LaVan's (1981:1244-

1246) research identified the inter-relationship and effects demographic characteristics, job characteristics, job satisfaction, professional behaviour and organisational climate have on organisational commitment. Although the research focused on organisational commitment, the author's research revealed communication as the correlation to commitment. This discovery subsequently revealed that communication is so important that it was classified as a separate field of study to organisational climate (Dennis, 1974:24). As introduced above, communication climate differs from organisational climate and holds significance within this study as it specifically concerns the internal organisational environment from the perspective of internal communication, the role perception plays in framing communication, as well as the focus on the dynamic relationship between people within the organisation. Dennis (1974:24) defines communication climate as:

A subjectively experienced quality of the internal environment of an organisation: the concept embraces a general cluster of inferred predispositions identifiable through reports of members' perceptions of messages and message-related events occurring in the organisation.

Although Redding (1972) initially developed the five constructs of communication climate, Dennis (1974) was however accredited with refining these constructs. These constructs are summarized below (Table 4.17):

CONSTRUCT	DEFINE	TYPES OF BEHAVIOUR ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTS
Superior – subordinate communication	Communication in terms of the extent of the supportive nature of the superior-subordinate relationship (Dennis 1974:24).	• Open communication • Trustworthiness • Encourages autonomy • Genuine concern • Apathy

		• Recognition
Perceived quality and accuracy of downward communication	Communication that is perceived by employees to be accurate and that there is a free flow of communication from the top-down.	• Timely feedback • Communicate accurate information • Sharing enough information • Mutual understanding
Superior openness and candour	The extent to which subordinates feel that their superiors are being open and honest with them, especially when it concerns sharing information.	• Consistency • Openness to sharing information • Credibility • Trust
Opportunities for upward communication	Subordinates' perceptions on the extent to which their opinions and view are being heard by their superiors and that they have an actual impact on the decision-making process.	• Active listening • Direct communication • Cyclical feedback
Reliability of information	Superiors need to be trusted for subordinates to believe that the information is reliable.	• Trust • Consistency

Table 2.7 – Constructs of Communication Climate and the Behaviours associated with the constructs. Redding (1972:24-25), Hayase (2009:11-12) and Rooney and Gottlieb (2007) Marlene et al. (2019:283)

As presented in the Table above (2.6), although there are five different constructs that are needed to create a positive communication climate, there are many common factors which are highlighted as follows:

- *Open communication* that is free flowing and that includes feedback that is consistent, timeous and cyclical.
- *Management* that has a dynamic relationship with their subordinates and who exhibit qualities such as mutual understanding, empathy, genuine concern, give recognition and allow autonomy.
- *Downward flow* of information that is perceived to be reliable and from a trustworthy source and *upward flow* that leads employees to believe that their “voices” are in fact heard and make an impact on decision-making.

With the constructs of communication climate as the backdrop, it is evident that the two driving forces behind creating a positive communication climate are the interactions and actions between and by management and employees. Therefore, this suggests that the experiences and perceptions of each of these “forces” are different and subsequently, result in different actions that impact the communication climate. The findings from Reyneke (2019) thesis entitled “*The influence of Communication Climate on Job Resources to Improve Employee engagement*” offers insights into this suggestion that management experiences and view of the communication climate is somewhat different to their staff or employees that are in non-management positions.

For example, the findings from the data with regards to receiving information through sources they prefer indicated the difference between management and non-management experiences. About 15.8% of non-management staff said they agree to “a little extent”, while in contrast, 9.5% of management indicated that to “a little extent” they receive information through sources they prefer (Reyneke 2019:15). The general findings from this data suggests that the communication climate experienced by management is constantly different to the experience by non-management staff. These findings hold significance in framing the literature for this study in that, firstly, the research occurred in South Africa and is from a *glocal* perspective and secondly, the suggestion that management make decisions based on the perceived communicate climate. This research has revealed that their experience is not a true reflection of what is happening at lower levels.

As presented in Figure 2.19, management has a critical role in the process of communication climate and the climate is determined by their actions which in turn shapes the perceptions of the individual employees. With communication climate representing the “tone” of communication amongst individuals and the role management plays in the communication climate, it can then be suggested that management then “set the tone”. Therefore, through management action, interaction and decision making guided by the corporate climate (policies and procedures), management plays a critical role in the communication climate. Nordin *et al.* (2014:1047-1048) agrees and positions communication climate as instrumental in hindering or encouraging the flow of communication within an organisation be it horizontal, upward or downward thus highlighting the objective of the study to determine the efficiency of internal communication processes within the hierarchical structures. Having established the significant role internal communication plays in managing emergent change, management structures, hierarchy and thus the level of control are significant contributors to determining the communication climate (Blomme 2012:6).

Both emergent change and communication climate have a significant common variable – both occur due to the day-to-day interactions between individuals and the organisation and both are emergent. According to Marlene *et al.* (2019:283) that behavioural support for change is guided by the communication climate and since all employees play an active role in emergent change, communication climate is essentially a significant factor in the role internal communication plays in efficiently managing emergent change. These common factors that influence a positive communication climate that were summarized above, suggests that the most of the influence in creating a positive communication climate relies on two general factors: management skills in communicating; and the flow of communication (upward and downward). Although the latter is guided by organisational culture and climate in the form of policies and procedures, it equally relies on management control and the ability of management to determine the communication needs of employees. In other words, know how to actively “read” the communication climate.

The literature has established the significant importance and the role that organisational structures in the form of communication channels and hierarchy has on internal communication processes. It has also presented the role management plays in impacting the communication climate at an individual level. Both these, subsequently, impact the efficiency of communication and the ability of internal communication to manage emergent change. The next section of the literature will propose the internal communication capacities to efficiently manage emergent change framed with the application of the Chaos Theory. As first introduced in Section 2.3.5 (Emergent Change Management as a Maintenance Process: People Centred and driven from the “Bottom-up”), Chapter 5 will present these capacities from the following viewpoints: internal organisational communication as a maintenance function; organisational structures and process that facilitates the maintenance process; and management skills and behaviours that facilitate efficient internal communication that manages emergent change.

2.18 Conclusion

An overview of the main ideas and theories necessary to comprehend the dynamics of organisational communication have been provided in this chapter. We were able to present an understanding of how organisations operate and adjust to emergent change by exploring the application of systems theory to communication processes. The chapter also examined how communication has changed historically, from its beginnings as propaganda to its current importance in the workplace. The chapter clarified the structure, background and the different types of internal communication, highlighting its crucial function in organisations. It also covered the subtleties of intercultural communication and the significance of communication climate. By examining these factors, the chapter aimed to evaluate how well-suited the existing internal communication models are, especially in the context of South Africa.

The next chapter explores the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes. This alternative viewpoint, referred to as the "maintenance process" combines the concepts of Emergent Change Management, Systems Thinking and Chaos Theory covered in this

chapter. Based on this theoretical framework and an appreciation of its inherent constraints, the study recommends a *g/local* approach to emergent change management. The recommended conceptual framework will be further developed in Chapter 3, which will act as a guide to meet the aims and objectives of the study.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 presented the theoretical foundations of the study; namely, systems theories; systems thinking; emergent change management; and internal organisational communication. Furthermore, the chapter presented the interdependency of these theoretical foundations against the backdrop of the aim and objectives of the study. Chapter 3 will present the conceptual framework of the study. Rocco and Plakhotnik (2009:128) states that the literature in a study needs to be seen as “honoring the past to inform the present and gives us the opportunity for it to affect the future.” However, to significantly achieve the objective of the study to explore the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal organisational communication processes, the researcher will be presenting the conceptual framework for this study with that objective in mind.

As stated by Caffrey (2020) a conceptual framework as a research tool can be used for various reasons, including visual representations of theoretical principles or to explain the exact definition of the researcher’s theory. In Chapter 3 of this study, the researcher will lay out a conceptual framework that shows how the literature related to the topic is connected. Specifically, the framework will highlight how systems thinking and internally aligned communication processes are used to manage emergent change in diverse workforces. A conceptual framework allows the researcher to argue why the topic is important and relevant and to present the key factors and the relationship amongst them (Ravitch and Riggan, 2017). The aim of the chapter is to present this relationship between the three literature foundations as well as the appropriateness of the Chaos Theory as a theoretical framework for using internal organisational communication to manage emergent change from a *glocal* perspective. Table 3.1 below provides an overview of the study objectives in line with the presented literature in Chapter 2 and the conceptual framework in Chapter 3.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE		SECTION OF LITERATURE	KEY FOCUS AREAS
Objective 1: To determine the efficiency of internal organisational communication in managing emerging change.	Objective 4: To explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes.	Systems	• Flow of information • Hierarchy • Culture climate
		Emergent Change	• Change agents • People centred • Maintenance
		Internal Organisational Communication	• Information flow • Communication channels • Intercultural communication
Objective 2: To examine the appropriateness of current models of internal organisational communication from a <i>glocal</i> perspective.		Internal Organisational Communication	• Emergent change • <i>Glocal</i> perspective
Objective 3: To determine the efficiency of current internal organisational communication processes within the various hierarchical levels of the selected organisation under study.		Systems	• Flow of information • Hierarchy • Culture climate
		Emergent Change	• Change agents • People centred • Maintenance
		Internal Organisational Communication	• Information flow • Communication channels • Intercultural communication

			• Communication climate

Table 3.1 – Overview of the study objectives aligned to the presented literature

The aim of the above Table 3.1 is to provide an overview of the study objectives in line with the literature presented in Chapter 2 and subsequently to present the interconnectedness of the literature framed by the Chaos Theory. The chapter will offer characteristics, attributes and abilities of communication processes, systems and culture that are better suited to manage emergent change from a *glocal* perspective.

3.2 Internal Communication Capacities for Managing Emergent Change: A Chaos Theory Framework

Communication is the lifeblood of any organisation and as reiterated throughout the literature, there is an interdependent link between communication, culture and emergent change framed around the concepts of systems and Systems Thinking and more specifically from the study's proposed conceptual framework, the Chaos Theory. One of the central ideas in the Chaos Theory is how small changes can have a bigger impact on a system or organisation when compared to large changes. The nature of modern organisations is of complexity, where the workforce is made up of individuals who actively influence other individuals in the organisation. According to Millerd (2020:1):

The individual behaviors and reactions of people within a complex system are unpredictable, but they are linked to one another. The feedback from each of those unpredictable actions will give feedback to others in the organisations and influence their subsequent decisions and reactions.

Correspondingly, Thiétart and Forgues (1995:25) propose that chaos arises not out of inadequate human action but as a “result of complex, tightly coupled relationships”. This further emphasizes the importance of looking at behaviour as an indicator of emergent change, as emergent change is influenced by local interactions. This places importance on managers to manage human interaction through internal communication and

information flow as opposed to hierarchy, control and planned changes to control emergent change. Subsequently, it is the structure of a system and the company strategy that determines the extent to which there is enough autonomy for local interactions to occur freely and for an organisation to self-organize. Cameron and Green (2015:173) emphasize that management need to realize the importance of self-knowledge in leading an organisation and adapting to changes, a process that sees the use of internal resources instead of resources that merely numerically measure and conclude with little context to the source of the change.

However, to provide communication needs aligned with those of the organisations and employees, leadership style and leadership process adopted by managers inform this decision-making process. Galacgac and Singh (2015:255) agree with the researchers view of the role of systems and offers an alternative view to leadership within the perspective of the Systems Thinking and the Chaos Theory. The author states that there is no “universal definition of what leadership is” and that the Chaos Theory proposes that there should not be a clear definition (Galacgac & Singh 2015:255). Leadership needs to adapt to the chaotic changes within an organisation and therefore by not defining it allows for flexibility in line with the needs of the organisation. Although these authors (Galacgac and Singh 2015:517) opine that leadership should not be defined to allow for greater adaptability, the researcher, supported by other authors offers an alternative view that sees managers as change agents and emergent leaders in the process of managing emergent change with internal organisational communication.

The study’s objectives largely focus on the efficiency of internal communications when managing emergent changes. Within the framework of the Chaos Theory, efficiency of communication holds significant importance as small changes can result in larger, chaotic changes in a system if left unattended. Furthermore, for a system to self-organize and remain at the edge of chaos where it is at its most adaptable and resilient, there needs to be a free flow of information and interaction which can only occur with efficient communication. As presented in previous chapters, management hierarchy, policies and procedures, organisational structure, culture and climate are some of the factors that impact the flow of information and level of interaction and therefore, efficiency of

communication. From a South African perspective, emergent change within the context of culturally specific communication processes and theories, is largely unexplored and still reflects colonial strategies and practices (Louw and Jackson, 2008:17-18, Nkoma *et al.*, 2015:16-17).

As presented in Section 2.15.2, the research critically analyzed existing internal communication models and offered the models limitations within two themes: culture and emergent change. Based on the supporting literature, the researcher identified the gaps in the current internal communication models with regards to managing emergent change from a *glocal* perspective. The next section of the literature will present the proposed internal communication capacities¹⁵ for managing emergent change from a *glocal* perspective against the framework of the Chaos Theory. This includes analyzing the capacities in their ability to facilitate efficient communication that is culture specific and can better manage emergent change. These sections will be discussed under the following sub-headings as first introduced in Figure 2.5 (Systems Thinking foundations) - organisational capacities and sociocultural capacities. The adapted figure below (3.1), presents the interrelatedness of systems theory; namely, the Chaos Theory and the foundation of Systems Thinking within the concept of internal communications capacities (organisational and sociocultural) for managing emergent change. Figure 3.1, with the addition of communication throughout the concept indicates the critical importance of communication as the “heart” of the framework.

¹⁵ The word “capacities” is used in terms of presenting the characteristics, attributes or features that constitute using internal communication as a maintenance tool. It does not refer to cultural capacity in terms of the “humans genetically based unique abilities and traits.” LIND, J., LINDENFORS, P., GHIRLANDA, S., LIDÉN, K. & ENQUIST, M. 2013. Dating human cultural capacity using phylogenetic principles. *Scientific Reports*, 3, 1785.

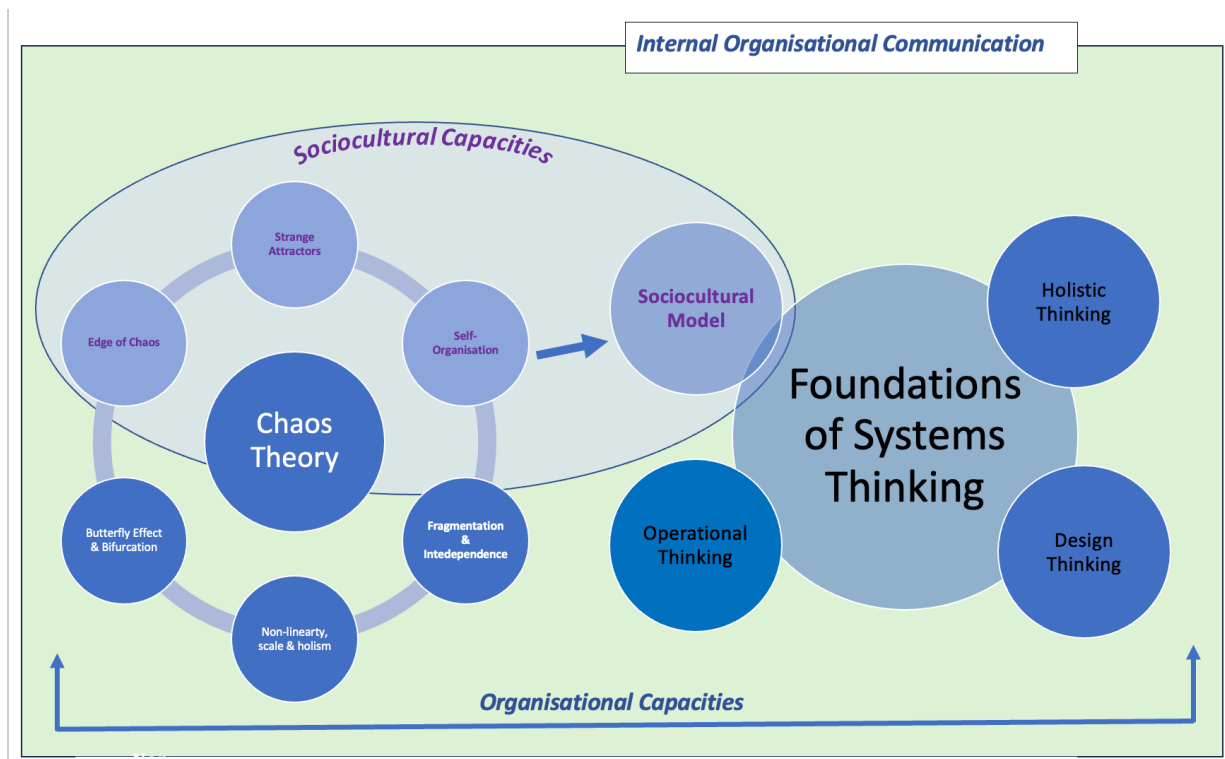


Figure 3.1 – Internal Communication Capacities within the Foundations of Systems Thinking and the Chaos Theory

In line with the objectives of this study, the researcher analyses Systems Thinking foundations from two standpoints interdependently: *Sociocultural capacities* (internal communications); and *organisational capacities* (emergent change):

- *Sociocultural capacities* (indicated in light blue) – this includes the integration of the sociocultural model from the foundation of the Systems Thinking and self-organisation, edge of chaos and strange attractors from the chaos theory.
- *Organisational capacities* (indicated in dark blue) – this includes the integration of holistic thinking, operational thinking and design thinking from the foundations of the system thinking and butterfly effect, bifurcation, non-linearity, scale and holism and fragmentation and interdependence from the chaos theory.
- *Internal organisational communication* (indicated in green) – is the binding element that is not only integrated in both these theories (system thinking and the chaos theory) but is also the driving force for emergent change.

As presented in Chapter 2, on the principles of the Chaos Theory, the edge of chaos is where the system is at its most adaptable and resilient to change. The literature has further presented self-organisation as one of the important features that facilitate a system toward the edge of chaos (Langosco, 2012). Furthermore, for self-organisation to occur there needs to be change as well as the presence of strange attractors that keep the system in recognizable form. The three key factors that influence self-organisation in a system or organisation are learning, culture and information with these factors being in an iterative process. With the edge of chaos requiring a free flow of energy in the form of information and interaction in the process of self-organisation, the three factors mentioned above (learning, culture and information) are informed by organisational and cultural capacities. Flower (1993:133) agrees and adds that information is what living systems need in order to transform themselves.

In exploring the Chaos Theory as a framework for managing emergent change with internal communication processes informed by organisational and sociocultural capacities, Figure 3.2 provides an overview of the conceptual framework. Where Figure 3.1 above provided an overview of the interrelatedness of Systems Thinking foundations and the Chaos Theory against the backdrop of organisational and sociocultural capacities, Figure 3.2 will present the detailed conceptual framework offered by the researcher.

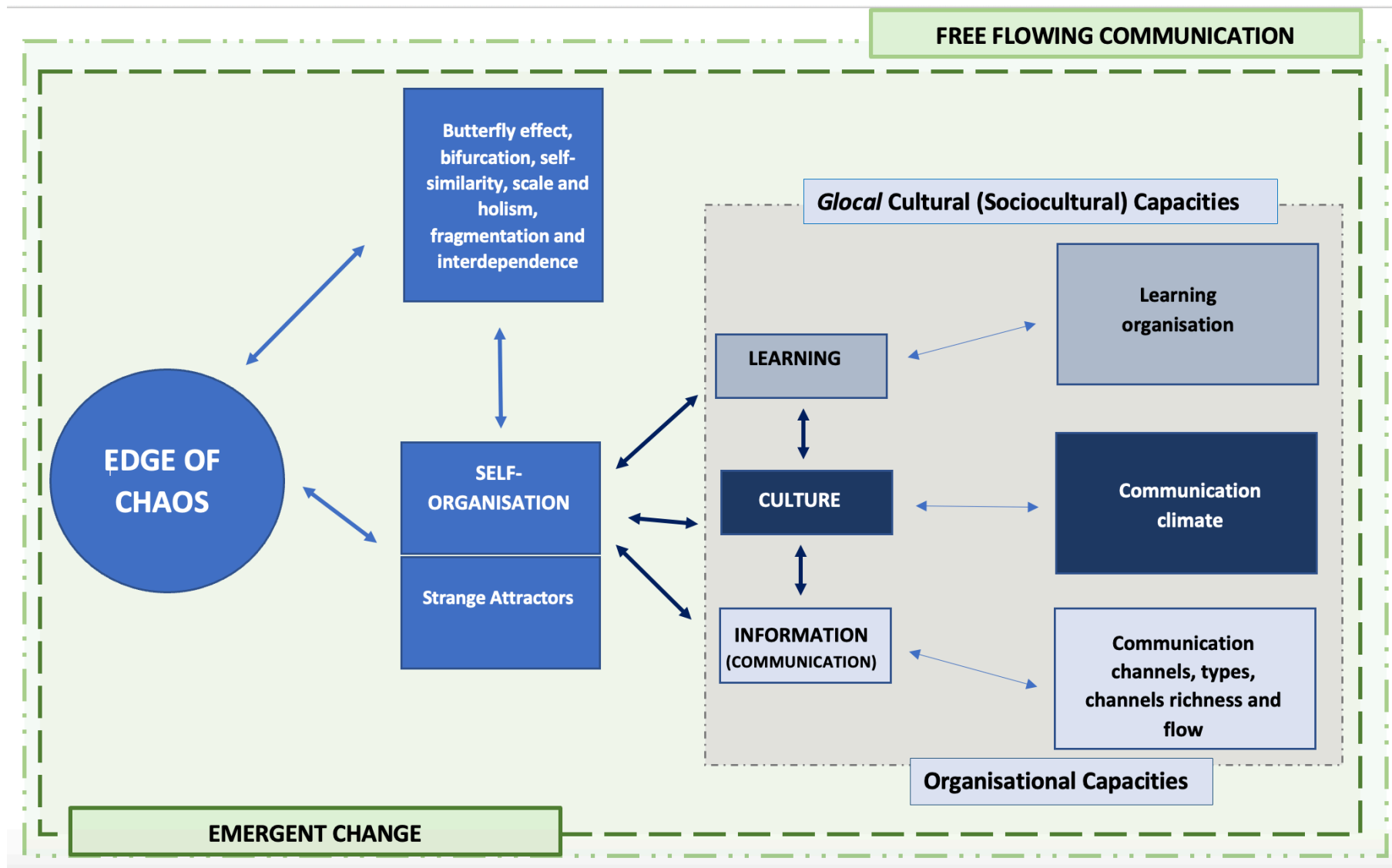


Figure 3.2 - A Chaos Theory Framework – managing emergent change with internal communication capacities (Source: author)

Regardless of the different capacities offered in the conceptual framework (organisational capacities and *glocal* cultural capacities) to manage emergent change, a free flow communication is at the core and these capacities cannot operate in isolation of communication hence the phrase communication is the lifeblood or heart of an organisation (Zinc, 2021:2). As indicated above with double arrows, maintaining a system at the edge of chaos is a constant “transition” and is dynamic. Flower (1993:51) states that the word transition means a “process” to which the researcher is proposing in the conceptual framework offered above (Figure 3.2). To add further clarity, the “free flow of communication” presented in Figure 3.2 refers to all communication channels and types within an organisation as presented in Section 2.15.4 (vertical, horizontal, diagonal, formal and informal). As presented in the figure, these channels and types of internal organisational communication are furthermore influenced and impacted by these organisational and sociocultural capacities.

The next section of this chapter (3.2.1 and 3.2.2) will discuss these capacities, organisational and sociocultural, against the backdrop of their influence and impact on the role and ability of internal organisational communication to manage emergent change. The researcher acknowledges the impact of other organisational capacities, such as infrastructure, financial and human resources, technological resources, partnerships, collaborations and monitoring and evaluation (Bates et al., 2014, Cox et al., 2018). However, for the purpose of the study and against the backdrop of the Chaos Theory, the researcher will be presenting the following capacities and their impact on the role of internal organisational communication in managing emergent change:

- Organisational structure
- Organisational strategy
- Organisational culture and climate
- Organisational diversity and inclusion practices

From the perspective of sociocultural capacities or *glocal* cultural capacities, the researcher acknowledges the impact of other prominent sociocultural capacities, such as political and legal systems, the media, health and well-being (Eisenberg E, 2001, Wutich et al., 2017). However, for this study the researcher will be focusing and discussing the following capacities:

- Cultural competence, intelligence and humanity
- Self-organisation, Stigmergy and swarm intelligence from a cultural perspective
- Shared meaning
- Symmetrical communication

In the context of situating the researcher's conceptual framework within the foundational principles of Systems Thinking, Figure 3.3 displays the shared components between the researcher's framework and the foundations of Systems Thinking. It also highlights important elements that the researcher contends are missing from the theory, particularly when examined through a *glocal* lens.

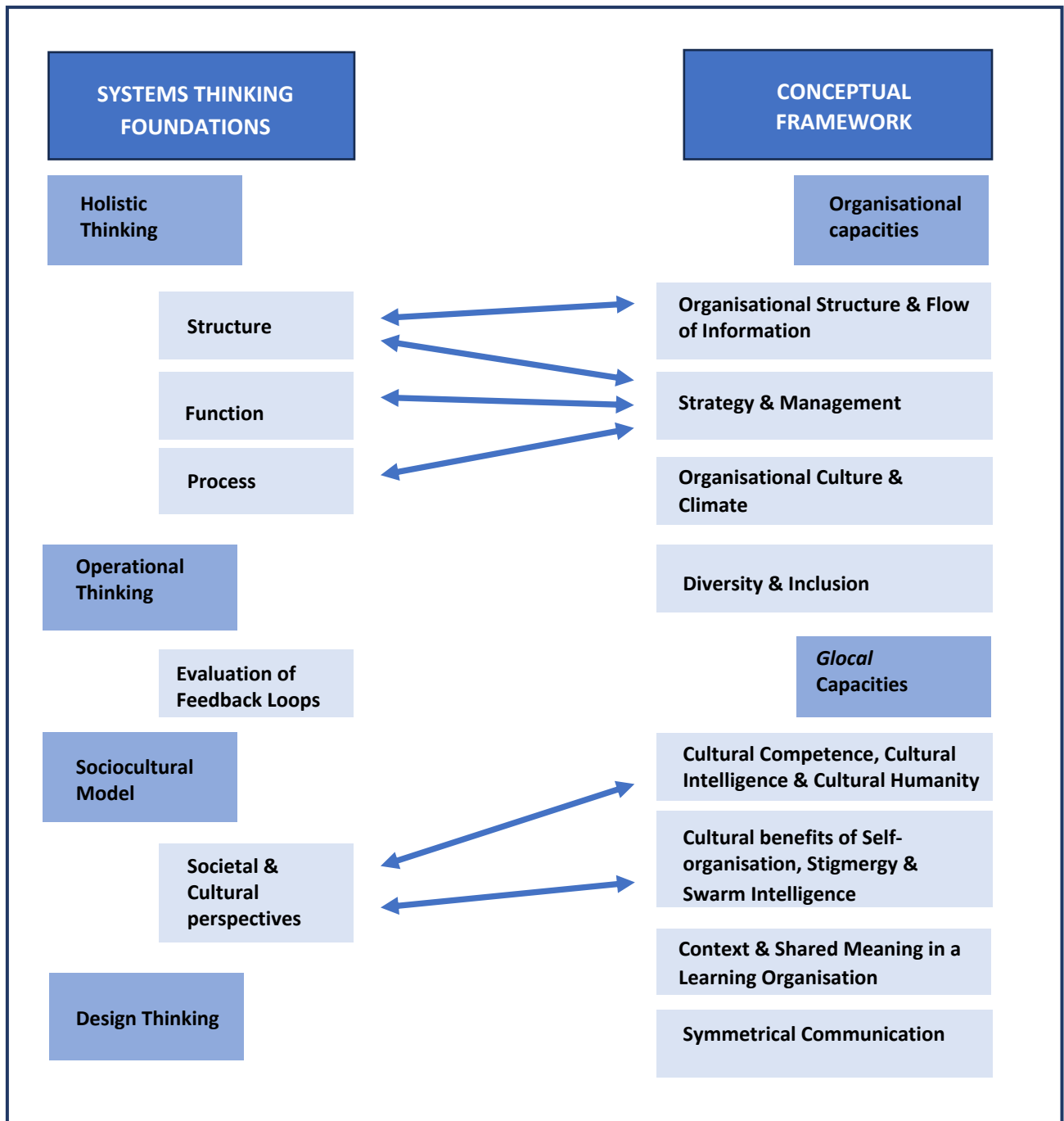


Figure 3.3 – A comparison of the shared elements of Systems Thinking Foundations and the research’s conceptual framework

As presented in Figure 3.3 above, there are common notions that are shared between Systems Thinking Foundations and the researcher’s conceptual framework informed by internal organisational communication and the Chaos theory. However, in aiming to achieve the objectives of the study, the research must note the gaps in the literature from the *glocal* perspective. These are highlighted as follows:

- **Limitations of Cultural Integration** – although culture is a crucial component of Gharajedaghi's systemic approach and includes the common ideals, standards, customs, attitudes and practices that characterise a sociocultural system, the focus of Gharajedaghi's model is mostly on societal and cultural viewpoints. The model does not present organisational culture, climate and communication climate, which is significant from the perspective of the Chaos Theory. Furthermore, it does not make specific reference to diversity and cultural inclusion ideas.
- **Limited focus on Internal Organisational Communication** - the model does not precisely dig into the intricate details of communication in terms of flow, channels, types or intricacies of internal organisational communication. Although Gharajedaghi emphasizes the value of comprehending sociocultural systems and their dynamics as well as the importance of organisational structure, function and process, the model does not go into great detail about the particular intricacies of communication within these systems.
- **Misinformed Design Thinking** – based on the above highlighted limitations, design thinking from this position could, therefore, be misinformed. Within the notion of Systems Thinking Foundations, design thinking is an emergent outcome informed by the factors within holistic and operational thinking and sociocultural theory. Subsequently, if these factors are limited in terms of their cultural integration and limited focus on internal organisational communication, it can be suggested that the design is, therefore, misinformed.

Based on the above limitations, the researcher proposes the conceptual framework for the study and will present the conceptual framework within the two focus areas; namely: organisational capacities; and *glocal* cultural capacities.

3.2.1 Organisational Capacities

Organisational structure, context and therefore, processes are informed by the basic theory of systems and specifically open systems. As defined by Merriam-Webster (2022d) a system is a group of items or in the case of organisations, departments and employees that regularly interact towards a goal and to form a whole. Organisational structure is a system that essentially outlines the various activities in an organisation to achieve its goals. These activities range from roles and responsibilities of

employees, chain of command, decision-making powers and essentially, how information flows up and down the hierarchy (Kenton, 2021:para. 1-3). Organisational capacities refer to the abilities, resources and structure an organisation has put in place to achieve its mission, vision and objectives.

As first introduced in Section 2.2.3 on Systems Thinking, the three foundations of Systems Thinking that relate to organisational capacities; namely, operational, holistic and design thinking are theories used within Systems Thinking to inform the processes, procedures and structures that inform the organisational structure. Furthermore, Figure 3.1 presented a more detailed view of these three foundations within their role of organisational capacities that inform and impact the role of internal organisational communication in managing emergent change. Specific to the study, organisational structure, strategy, culture and climate and diversity and inclusion practices will be presented below.

i. Organisational Structure and Flow of Information

The organisational structure and hierarchy of an organisation essentially determines the way things are done and by who. Throughout the literature it has been articulated that when an organisation or manager feels out of control that they exert more control in the form of processes and procedures, therefore, more structure. Mason (2022:1) suggests that “order can be confused with the more popular notion of control”. In traditional terms, control is the method used to overcome chaos and the proposition that you can create “stability and order” with chaos is somewhat of a paradox. However, within the framework of the Chaos Theory, this is not a paradox but essentially the “edge of chaos” or the perfect dynamic balance between order and chaos.

According to the Chaos Theory, when there is too much control a system loses its ability to innovate and thus loses its competitive edge. However, when the system is too chaotic it becomes unrecognizable and literally “falls apart”. Langosco (2012:3) agrees and states that for an organisation to be efficient there needs to be sufficient structure to allow some order but it should not reduce its flexibility and ability to create new behaviour that leads to innovation. From a Chaos Theory perspective, dynamic energy or action is needed to keep a system at the “edge of chaos”. As presented in Figure 3.2 within an organisational context, information and thus communication, is

the energy and action needed to keep it at the “edge of chaos”. Furthermore, it emphasise that emergent change is essential to organisational success. Emergent change is continuous and even though for centuries the literature has revealed the existence of change in organic systems, organisations are still surprised when change occurs. Garnett (2019:21) agrees and suggests that “it seems to be contradictory that amidst such prevalent emergent change, organisations are still struggling to manage it effectively”. Figure 3.3 below illustrates the dynamic between order and chaos and how information and interaction or action maintains an organisation at the edge of chaos where it is the most adaptable and efficient.

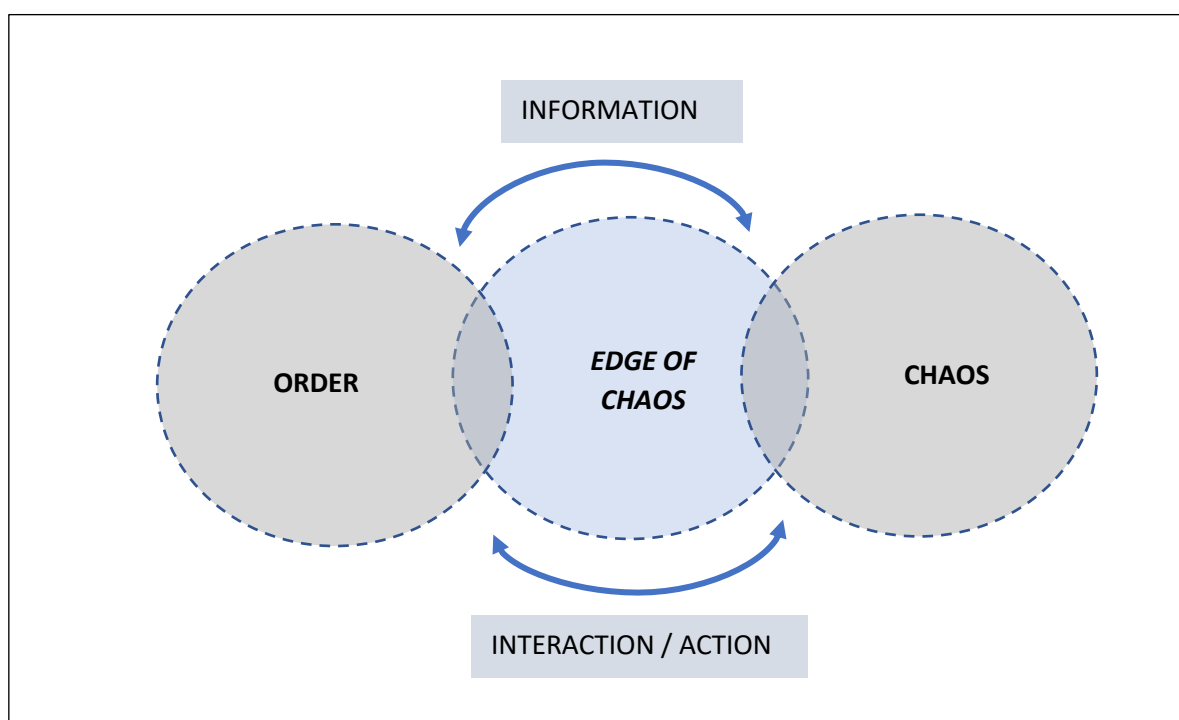


Figure 3.4 – Influence of Information and Interaction on an organisations ability to position itself at the edge of chaos

What is important to note and which was discussed in Section 2.2.2.3 a (vi), is that the edge of chaos is a transition and is defined as a “process”. Hudson (2000:224) adds that the edge of chaos is essentially a “transition between order and chaos” and therefore depicted in Figure 3.4 with the edge of chaos overlapping order and chaos. Consequently, the edge of chaos is not a static state and with information and interaction or action to drive this dynamic process, the flow of information is critical and is what all living systems need to adapt.

As previously discussed, senior management is responsible for the overall strategy of an organisation, thereafter, the action that is needed to achieve these objectives are carried out “top-down” by lower-level management through the various levels of hierarchy. Information and strategy that originates from senior management is often purposefully planned ahead of time and thus inefficient in managing emergent change due to the complex nature of a modern organisation.

Management control is often inefficient in managing emergent change as change in modern organisations is so frequent and complex that senior managers do not have the time to identify these changes, develop a strategy or plan and then thereafter, implement these strategies. Bamford and Forrester’s (2003) view is that change and internal organisational communication needs to be decentralized and more “bottom-up” to meet the requirements of a complex system in emergent change. From a South African perspective, a Deloitte (2019:13) report revealed that according to the respondents, the reason why leaders in South Africa are not effective is that performance management is driven by a “traditional hierarchy”. Behaviour of the individuals within these systems and subsequently their collective behaviour can determine the flow of information from both top-down and bottom-up. However, this flow of information is often impacted by the level of control employed on these systems by such factors as management control and stringent company policies and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

The flow of information from an organisational capacity point of view is informed by the organisations structure. Widhiastuti (2012:185) agrees and states that communication and organisational structure cannot be separated. Different organisations use different types of organisational structures according to the organisation’s needs. Although there are a variety of different structures offered by various authors, from centralized mechanistic or decentralized organic structures to vertical structures (functional and divisional), matrix organisations and open boundary structures in each of these structures’ information flows is different (Budros, 2000, Killingsworth and Eschenbacher, 2018, de Kinderen and Kaczmarek-Heß, 2020, Lim and Moon, 2021, SHRM, 2022). One aspect these authors do agree on is that the structure determines the reporting lines, communication flow and the level of interaction within the organisation.

Conversely, from the perspective of the systems and the Chaos Theory is the factor of time delays which is inherent to any system. Time delays is the time it takes between the cause and the subsequent effect and from an organisational perspective, time delays can occur over a period of time as well as across departments due to the interrelatedness of a system or organisation. Maani and Cavana (2007:35) propose that delays occur because of “information or physical transfer”. With organisational structure determining the flow of information, it can then be concluded that depending on the organisations structure, time delays are inevitable and thus time delays have an impact on an organisation being at the edge of chaos. Griffin (2022:para. 4) adds that the more levels or levels of hierarchy in the organisation, the longer it takes for the information to filter down and added to this is the factor of the message or information being distorted or filtered as it moves down. This is especially true with vertical and horizontal communication. Considering the above and from a Chaos Theory perspective, it can be concluded that organisational structure has the following limitations to managing emergent change from an internal communication perspective:

- *Information is needed to keep an organisation at the edge of chaos* - time delays, because of information filtering through the levels of structure or hierarchy through vertical or horizontal communication impacts the amount of information and therefore could impact the ability of the organisation to stay at the edge of chaos.
- *The Edge of chaos is a transition* – information and communication needs to not only be free flowing but it needs to be informed by interaction or action in a dynamic process. Structure and reporting lines limit the ability of an organisation to be dynamic in the transition process.
- *Change is paramount to remaining at the edge of chaos* – organisational structures are developed in line with strategies that guide behaviour and present control measures. Too much control informed by structure such as strict reporting lines and flows of communication try to control and limit change. However, change is an essential part of driving an organisation to the edge of chaos.

The flow of information limits the system’s ability to organise that information to suit its needs. According to Flower (1993:51), “the science of self-organising systems says that if you want order, you need a free flow of information because information is what

living systems use to transform themselves”. As mentioned earlier in this section, self-organisation cannot be achieved through control by management or by policies and structures. Communication forms an integral part of the process of self-organisation both in a positive and negative way. Top-down communication that is often used by organisational management to control a system does not provide the ideal environment for autonomy and therefore hinders self-organisation. According to Peppers (2014:para. 2), bottom-up communication allows for employees to use their own initiative when dealing with changes within the organisations at the local level. With so many changes, especially emergent change happening at local levels in an organisation, it is almost impossible for a manager to keep track of the changes and even more so impossible to exert control over these changes at this level. The benefit of a maintenance process that is driven from bottom-up is that the information provided by the system or employees is based on actual information that is current, introspective and relevant to the changes occurring. This provide managers with enough information to make decisions and “maintain” emergent change.

Flower (1993:51) believes that modern managers see information as power and to control employee’s information needs to be “fed to people in little doses”. This process of withholding and controlling information is reinforced through corporate structures and hierarchy. The worldwide view, according to Ströh and Jaatinen (2002) is that structure determines the information that is needed and managers often play a ‘gatekeeper’ role that sees them withholding as well as ‘feeding’ information to employees to manage perceptions. Gharajedaghi (2011:232) states that the desired characteristics of a system such as an organisation needs a “lean, simple, nonbureaucratic and flexible organisation with easy communication up and down”.

There is no end point to emergent change and thus emergent change occurs in an ongoing dynamic state, just like the edge of chaos. According to Mason (2022), organisations tend to be focused and fixated on creating structures with the purpose of control that essentially limit the ability of a system to self-organize and remain at the edge of chaos. The Chaos Theory in essence suggests otherwise and encompasses the process of maintaining the organisation at the edge of chaos where it is at its most adaptive. A maintenance process for managing emergent change allows for greater flexibility and free flow of information – elements that are needed to manage emergent change in a dynamic organisation. The structure of the organisation, therefore, also

needs to be flexible to adapt to changes. Hong (1999:178) agrees and suggests that organisational structures needs to be modifiable and flexible and for “structure to accommodate strategy” which leads to the next argument of the traditional role strategy plays in managing emergent change from a Chaos Theory perspective.

ii. Strategy and Management versus Maintenance and Leadership

Traditionally, management approaches focus on control – from hierarchical structure, policies and procedures and the flow of information. Control is conventionally seen to prevent chaos and disorder. Information is critical within the process of managing emergent change from a Chaos Theory perspective. The flow of information and thus how information is communicated holds significance for managers as discussed above (3.2.1 – i). Traditionally, management and leadership are seen as the central “system” to which everything else gravitates around. Conger (1992:18) defined leaders as “individuals who establish direction for a working group of individuals and who gain commitment from this group of members to established direction”. By definition and the use of the term “establish” implies a fixed, inflexible process of management guided by a single individual – the manager. Too much emphasis is placed on the central role of leaders or managers in key positions to manage the emergent change process. However, the view of the Chaos Theory and Systems Thinking sees leaders or managers and the rest of the organisation as being part of the process of managing emergent change and not just the role of one individual. This view implies that for decades, traditional leadership and management has put the “cart before the horse” – culture and the interactions between people that constantly change culture should be the driving force for leadership decisions and not the other way around.

Under the Systems Thinking assumption, one can only gain insights into the system by examining relationships within the systems and taking a “worldview” approach. Focus is on the “overall” versus the parts. In Reynolds and Holwell’s (2010:8) book, “Systems Approaches to Managing Change”, the common expression “Can’t see the forest for the trees” holds significance within the concept of managing change with the impact of culture on efficient internal organisation communication. The author offers the following:

Systems Thinking is precisely about changing the focus of attention to the forest, so that you can see the trees in their context. Understanding the forest gives new and powerful insights about the trees. Such insights are completely inaccessible if one concentrates on the individual trees. So, Systems Thinking is a way of looking at (and making sense of) the world.

The researcher offers the view that managers and supervisors as custodians of managing emergent change must master this skill of being able to see “the forest for the trees”.

Classical science has been concerned with independent variables from an analytical perspective. Such is the case when traditional management strategies use this three-step analytical process to manage change. In the case of an organisation, the first step sees the problem been taken apart, then the parts analyzed separately and in isolation and finally tries to combine the understanding of parts of the problem into the explanation of the whole problem. Gharajedaghi (2011:16) explains that this analytical approach has been in place for over 400 years and it is the view of the researcher that an analytical perspective as explained in Chapter 2 of the literature review is not an effective process or model in managing emergent change. Such is the case with managing a predetermined change like a merger or restructuring.

According to Spacey (2016:1), unlike planned change emergent change is not driven by long term planning and strategy and is defined as “change that is driven by small, frequent releases”. Due to the chaotic nature of systems and the system being in constant change, observing patterns of behaviour can assist in prediction. However, it is the researcher’s opinion that if you are unaware of these “behaviours” then it is impossible to know what pattern to observe. This leads to the notion and the importance of a manager’s role in identifying behaviours that form subsequent patterns and therefore indicators of change.

Based on the above notion and importance of identifying patterns of behaviour to “predict” changes, one needs to understand the foundation of the behaviour that drives the changes before being able to identify it. Within this respect, understanding employees’ culture and subsequently preferred methods of internal communication is critical in managing emergent change in modern organisations.

According to Levy (1994:171) “Chaos Theory suggests that changes in industry structure can be endogenous”. This notion suggests that factors such as the impact of culture and subsequent communication within the organisation are drivers in changing the structure of an organisation, especially from an informal point of view. The Chaos Theory is a suitable framework in navigating and identifying these patterns. Wheatley (1993:6) agrees and states that “self-organisation is only available through this passage into chaos...you cannot get true transformation without chaos”.

With strategies driven by senior management and rolled out and facilitated by the various other levels of management in an organisation, the latter needs to be able to make sure these strategies are adapting to emergent changes within the system and sub-systems. Levy (1994:172) states that there is a need for broad strategies, however, due to the dynamic nature of an organisation strategies need to be able to adapt. As discussed in Section 2.3 strategy in traditional management terms is rigid in nature and planned, making detailed, top-down organisational strategies inappropriate in dealing with emergent change. Within the concept of the Chaos Theory, the term strategy is rather referred to as a ‘guideline’. A practical example and analogy of strategy within the Chaos Theory is seeing strategy as a game of chess. One can know the rules of playing chess but this does not necessarily mean that you know exactly how to successfully play. The insights into the game come from playing the game and the lessons learned through the interaction with players in the game. Furthermore, even if you gain insights through interaction there is no way of knowing which strategy was successful (Levy 1994:172).

The Chaos Theory lends to the belief that large organisations cannot simply be categorized into hierarchical charts or methods as human relationships and behaviour in complex systems do not function like this. Interrelationships within an organisation are driven by human behaviour and are web-like and thus difficult to predict (Cheprasov, 2021). Communication is the foundation of any organisation and access to information becomes essential to maintain efficient communication. According to Englund (2009), information is the primary organising force within the concepts of the

Chaos Theory and is the key indicator in the prediction of change, making efficient internal organisational communication paramount to the success of the organisation.

The concept of strategy, in relation to change management was first introduced in Chapter 3 of the literature review and holds significant relevance in the applying of the Chaos Theory as a framework for managing emergent change. To reiterate the definition, strategy is essentially made in advance and purposefully developed suggesting long-term planning (Mintzberg 1987:11). With emergent change happening in real-time, the notion of managing real-time change with long-term planning that is one-dimensional is obsolete. Bamford and Forrester (2003:548) agree and state that from a systems point of view, managing change is less about detailed plans and strategy where one-dimensional change strategies not only increase instability but only generate short-term results. Although elements of strategy are inherently needed in any system, including internal systems within an organisation, the researcher is suggesting a move away from “strategy” in its traditional form. Zahn (1999:8) adds that traditional strategy attempts to exert control and predict future interactions to manage change.

Both organisational structure and strategy involve a step-by-step process which inevitably takes time causing a time delay between the cause to the effect and the response to this change as presented in the previous section. However, it is the view of the researcher that change within modern organisations is not a step-by-step process and is essentially dynamic and constantly changing. Priesmeyer (1992:112) agrees and states that “this is not a world of constants that can be captured with measures of singular, static performance like total sales, total profits, and daily production quantities; it is a world of dynamics”. Time delays and the step-by-step process of strategy decreases the ability of an organisation to efficiently manage emergent change and with information driving emergent change, time delays essentially cause information delays thereby limiting the “energy” or information needed to keep the organisation at the edge of chaos.

Offering more insights into the impact of information and interaction/action on the edge of chaos is presented in Figure 3.4. Figure 3.5 illustrates the influence of both organisational structure and strategy on the process.

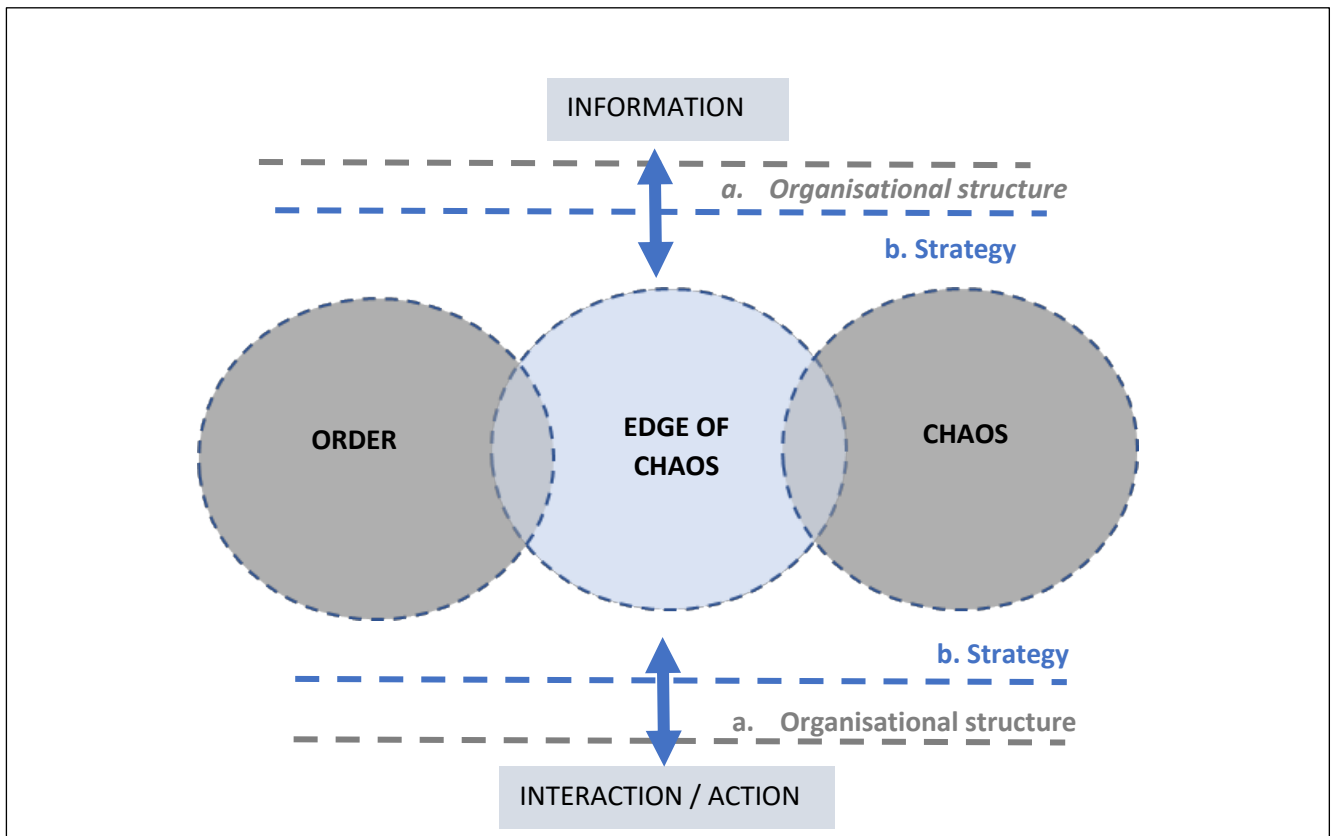


Figure 3.5 – Impact of organisational structure and strategy on information and interaction/action flow

As illustrated by the dotted lines, (a) organisational structure and (b) strategy act as a layer in which information and interaction/action must flow. The more layers in the organisational structure, the longer it takes for information to flow down and essentially causing time delays and subsequently not providing the information (energy) and interaction (action) needed to keep an organisation at the edge of chaos. The edge of chaos is a process of transition and needs a constant free flow of information to maintain this dynamic process, which makes prediction a challenge.

According to Mason (2022:1), the Chaos Theory proposes “order without predictability”. This suggests that using clearly defined strategies that are essentially developed to improve predictability are inefficient for managing emergent change as the system “never lands in the same place twice”. No strategy can plan for every single eventuality. Furthermore, the notion of bifurcation, butterfly effect and the impact of interdependence, further suggests changes are so frequent, dynamic and interdependent that it makes any type of strategy irrelevant to the changing context

and further emphasizes the notion that a process of maintenance and not strategy is needed for organisations to manage emergent change. Furthermore, this process needs to be driven from the bottom-up and not driven downward by organisational structure and strategy as emergent change is because of local interactions. Within the concept of strategy from a traditional perspective (as illustrated in Figure 2.8), order is maintained through a central force that exerts control through planned change strategies whereas from a Chaos Theory perspective, emergent change is driven by local interactions. This leads the researcher to the next point of emphasis in offering the Chaos Theory as a framework for managing emergent change; namely, the notion of self-organisation within emergent change.

As an essential principle of the Chaos Theory introduced in Section 2.2.2.3 a (vi), self-organising systems not only provide stability over time but is one of the key factors that drive a system towards the edge of chaos, where there is a perfect balance between order and chaos because self-organisation occurs because of local interactions, strict strategies and hierarchy that inform the flow of information and company culture that is driven from top-down is unable to sustain self-organisation in a complex system such as an organisation. Galacgac and Singh (2015) agree and equally offers the view that rigid rules and guidelines do not allow for flexibility and therefore make maintaining emergent change impossible. Spacey (2019) also agrees and states that self-organisation can only occur because of the independent behaviour of the parts in a system. A balance between order and chaos, the edge of chaos is necessary to achieve maximum adaptability in a system to which self-organisation and strange attractors are driving forces. Organisational culture and climate as presented in 2.19 are factors that act as strange attractors in keeping an organisation within bounded stability.

iii. Organisational Culture and Climate

Traditionally, organisational culture and climate are seen as critical factors in the organisations capacity to manage change from a sociocultural perspective. Where culture is said to set the boundaries of behaviour, organisational climate influences that behaviour (Hobson, 2018:1). Wardhani and Kartikawangi's (2020) research reveals that there is a direct link between the impact of internal organisational communication on corporate culture. However, the research presents it from the view

of corporate culture being directed by senior management and sees internal organisational communication as a means of influencing employees to become accustomed to these prescribed corporate culture guidelines. This process, like traditional views of managing change is top-down. The minority decides on corporate culture values that the majority are encouraged to follow. Alvarez (2020:para. 2) agrees and states that a company's mission and vision, perks and diversity initiatives, for example, make for good corporate culture on paper. This leads to an important point of emphasis regarding corporate culture and climate and its ability to manage emergent change from a Chaos Theory and self-organisation perspective. These points are summarized below:

- *Need for constant change* - throughout the literature the concept of self-organisation is given critical importance in managing emergent change. Change needs to occur for a system to self-organise. Corporate culture and climate are a predetermined set of values and mission and policies and procedures, respectively. Therefore, factors that do not change are limited in their ability to drive self-organisation.
- *Cannot be controlled* - self-organisation is spontaneous and therefore cannot be controlled. Corporate culture and climate are controlled and essentially determined at executive level and driven top-down.
- *Driven by local interactions* - self-organisation is a result of local interactions and is not because of planned change to achieve order. Corporate culture and climate although communicated throughout the organisation, occurs at senior/executive and mid-level management level respectively and therefore not driven by local interactions.

Therefore, from a Chaos Theory perspective organisational culture and climate are limited in their capacity to manage emergent change and drive self-organisation – a critical factor in the organisation's ability to remain at the edge of chaos. Equally important to the role self-organisation plays in maintaining an organisation at the edge of chaos is the principle of strange attractors. Traditionally, organisational culture is seen as a strange attractor and can pull a system towards a recognizable shape by creating boundaries that create order amidst chaos (Cartwright 1991; Bechtold 1997; Stroh 1998a; Nestian 2011; Dolan *et al.* 2013). Just like self-organisation, strange attractors are also aperiodic and driven by local interactions. Therefore, it is the view

of the researcher that if strange attractors are driven by local interactions and corporate culture and climate is essentially driven by senior and mid-level management, the corporate culture and climate is limited in its ability to manage emergent change. Furthermore, as a prescribed, predetermined and planned set of ideas, corporate culture and climate is not flexible and able to quickly adapt to change. Change is constant in dynamic systems such as organisations and therefore for a strange attractor to function it needs to be flexible enough to adapt to emergent changes. As introduced in Section 2.2.2.3 a (ii), strange attractors cannot be mandated or dictated to staff via company mission, vision, strategy and corporate culture. It must emerge from experiences of the people working at these local levels (Gilstrap 2005).

Therefore, the researcher would like to offer an alternative view that self-organisation and strange attractors should be driven bottom up and informed by the communication climate that occurs through local interactions. Freimuth (2006:145) agrees and states that the “new order does not depend on external intervention but generates from inner guidelines that are called strange attractors”. Bottom-up change is introspective and is based on the *actual* situation and not the *impression* managers have of the situation. The same applies to internal communication, bottom-up information is more *information rich* and reflects the current situation. This provides managers and the organisation enough information to use communication as a maintenance tool to manage emergent change in real-time and maintain strange attractors at local level.

Gilstrap's (2005:61) research on strange attractors and human interaction connection revealed that although human experience and interaction is not deterministic, it is still guided by what the author refers to as “control parameters” such as information. Human interaction, like the concept of the Chaos Theory are not predictable but do show a pattern guided by strange attractors. And as mentioned earlier, company culture is limited in its ability and flexibility to adapt to the ever changing nature of an organisation as well as the equally changing workforce diversity. From a Chaos Theory perspective, for meaningful interaction and thus transformation to occur, there needs to be shared meaning facilitated by strange attractors. For strange attractors to have a shared meaning, they cannot be dictated or forced on employees, they need to occur as a result of experience from within the organisation at the local level (Gilstrap 2005:51). Shared meaning is a collaborative, inclusive process and therefore cannot be achieved through management control. This leads to the notion that culture is thus

created through a collaborative process, irrespective of specific cultural beliefs. Nakata (2009) quoted in Patrick (2018a:11) offers insights into shared meaning and culture - “culture is not a value; culture is the meaning we attach to aspects of the world around us meaning as culture’ through means of sets of values”. Therefore, if culture is shared through a process of collaboration and thus through constant interaction, it is subsequently emergent. This leads to the view that the dynamic development of culture and subsequently shared meaning needs to be created at local level for it to have meaning. Within the concepts of the Chaos theory, the notion that organisational culture should be driven top-down or by a specific department is redundant. Considering South Africa’s diverse culture and workforce, it further suggests the necessity for self-organisation and the development of strange attractors at microlevel to be subsequently developed by those individuals at that micro-level for the strange attractors to have shared meaning. This follows a bottom-up process of not creating a micro-organisational culture that is not only shared but reflects the diversity of the workforce and is inclusive.

iv. Diversity and Inclusion Driven from the Bottom-up

Transforming the South African cultural narrative into decolonization, especially within organisational communication goes beyond just “ticking the boxes”. Deloitte (2020:6) research indicates “that many companies still underestimate the change required” when it comes to diversity and inclusion within the South African workplace and it is more of an administrative process than a strategic one. This further emphasizes the need for transformation to happen at the grassroots level. The researcher proposes that an internal communication process for managing emergent change can foster this transformation. Many of these policies and procedures are driven by the decision makers at the executive level. This is problematic if the aim is to achieve full transformation and not just driving a business towards compliance. The literature has already established that communication is essentially top-down and by driving transformation in culture and diversity from the top-down could be problematic. The Deloitte (2020:6) report makes specific reference to the importance of the topic of diversity and inclusion as a subject “in boardrooms across the world”. The 2020 diversity and inclusion report include the findings from the Deloitte (2019) *Global Human Capital Report* that states that 80% of South African leaders indicated diversity

and inclusion as being “important” or “urgent”. The researcher acknowledges the recognition of diversity and inclusion as being important and based on the findings such as the above. However, the research is nearly exclusively focused on senior management within the role of Human Resources. The respondents from this survey were made up of either chief executives, vice-presidents or mid-level employees, with 63% of that sample being in a Human Resources function (Deloitte 2019:16).

This lends to the view of the researcher that diversity and inclusion as important elements in managing emergent change in culturally diverse workforces could be better successfully driven by all employees through the process of dynamic, internal organisational communication. This process, through the dynamic interaction of employees and intercultural communication within the organisation, allows for a collaborative transformation and not transformation driven from the top-down. As presented in Figure 2.16 for meaningful interaction and thus transformation to occur, there needs to be shared meaning. Shared meaning is a collaborative, inclusive process and not achieved through management control. The notion that diversity and inclusion should be driven top-down or by a specific department such as Human Resources is limited.

There is a phrase often used to describe the responsibility of leaders or managers and that is “the buck stops here,” implying that responsibility falls solely on the leader or manager (McCarthy, 2014:129). However, from a Chaos Theory perspective, leadership is seen as a dynamic, collective process where individuals working under the manager exert influence and therefore create different layers of knowledge and understanding as well as creating a culture of shared meaning. From a Chaos Theory perspective, the creation of shared meaning and thus relevant and diversity inclusive strange attractors ensures that during a period of chaos patterns are revealed and opportunities for new behaviour are revealed. As key change agents in this process, managers are custodians of guiding their microenvironment or department towards the creation of shared meaning and towards a system that remains at the edge of chaos. As presented throughout the literature, communication (information) and interaction (action) are the foundations of managing emergent change. The foundations that the researcher proposes should be maintained through internal communication and facilitated by managers within the organisation. This leads to the view that managers, therefore, need to have the relevant capacities or skills to facilitate

this process. These capacities are presented in the next Section 3.2.2 and are framed around the concepts of the Chaos Theory from a *glocal* perspective.

3.2.2 *Glocal* Cultural (sociocultural) Capacities

An individual's behaviour, beliefs, values and attitudes are shaped and influenced by a combination of social and cultural variables, which are referred to as sociocultural (Lantolf, 2000). With sociocultural capacities referring to the ability, resources and structures in place that support the “human” aspect of a living system, these capacities differ from organisational capacities in that they are mostly driven by local interactions at the micro-level as the researcher proposes. The Chaos Theory as a framework moves away from managing emergent change at a macro level but instead presents the view that emergent change should be maintained from a micro level. In reiterating this perspective, the edge of chaos, strange attractors and self-organisation occur and are driven by local interactions. Even emergent change is driven by local interactions. Therefore, emergent change which is facilitated by internal organisational communication needs to equally be driven and maintained at the local level.

This view, subsequently, draws the focus to three points of emphasis as presented and illustrated below in Figure 3.4 that encompasses the *glocal* cultural capacities needed to use internal communication to facilitate emergent change:

- *Flow of Information*; and
- *Cultural Competence Skills* that are facilitated/maintained by managers to create a
- *Communication Climate* at the edge of chaos

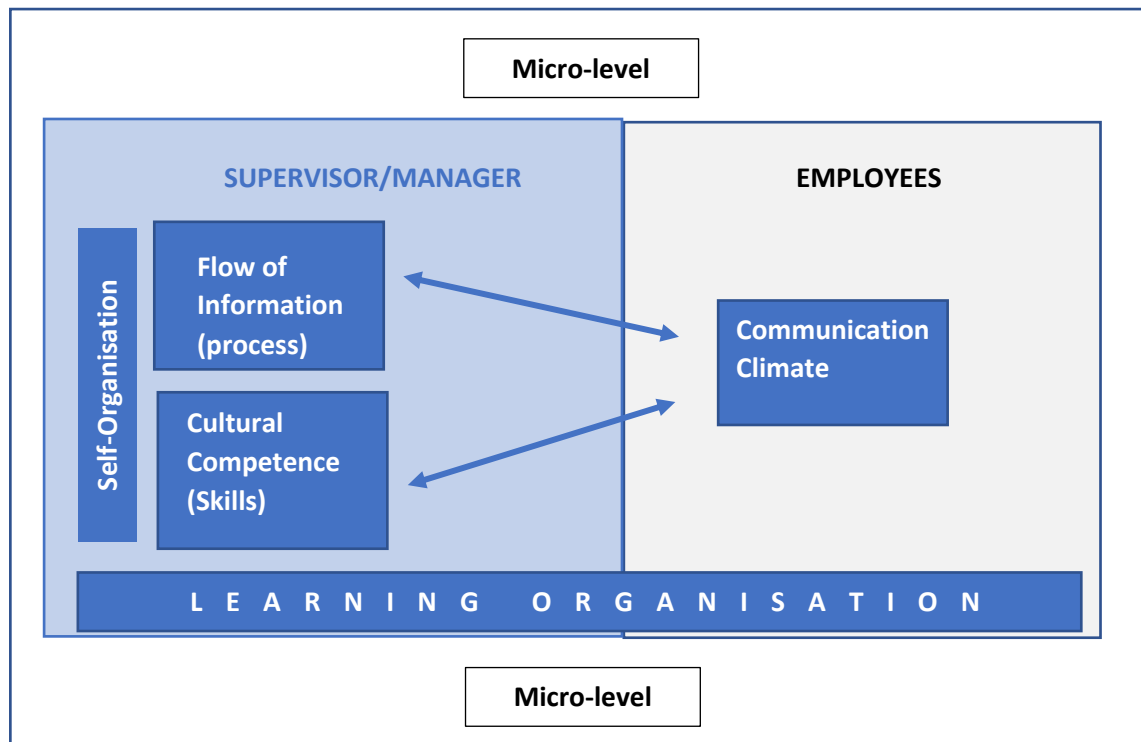


Figure 3.6 – Internal communication capacities to manage emergent change at micro-level

The above Figure 3.6 illustrates the interdependency and impact the three factors to achieve self-organisation (learning, culture and information) have on creating a communication climate that functions at the edge of chaos. Supervisors and managers as change agents in an organisation and custodians in the facilitation of cocreating the communication climate are essentially responsible for maintaining this dynamic interaction. To maintain this dynamic interaction and facilitate a learning organisation, certain capacities in the form of skills and processes are required. These *skills* (cultural competence) and *processes* (flow of information) as framed around the Chaos Theory are discussed below.

i. Cultural Competence, Cultural Intelligence and Cultural Humanity (skills)

With culture constantly changing and being redefined by the interactions of members within a group, leaders need to be redefined as “emergent leaders” – leaders that change their style of communication, information sharing, strategy, decision-making and various other management functions to adapt to the changes within the organisation and their department. Traditional management sees leadership as the central driving force to manage change and the “be-all-and-end-all” of managing

teams and departments. However, applying the concepts of the Chaos Theory guided by Systems Thinking perspective sees leadership as being the variable that needs to change and adapt to changes such as the culture and communication needs of an organisation. Galacgac and Singh (2015:255) offer the following:

Therefore, defining the culture would mean determining the style of leadership that is needed. Because culture varies from organisation to organisation, what defines a leader will also differ, as they will need to adapt to specific and unique organisational needs. And, as a leader, it is important to note that leadership is not delivered by a single individual, but rather, is dependent on the interaction between an agent and its organisation and is constructed from social recognition.

This view reemphasizes the importance of interaction and the active adaptation of culture in guiding a chaotic organisation towards self-organisation. It further suggests that developing an actively adapting culture within an organisation is not solely driven by a manager – it is an interaction of all members and thus moves towards creating shared meaning. Table 2.2 presented the need for managers to adopt a complexity adaption view when dealing with changes that includes seeing change as an opportunity to grow and evolve, which includes creating an environment that facilitates adaptive cultural changes amongst employees. Gharajedaghi (2011:65) agree and state that “self-organising, purposeful, sociocultural systems must be self-evolving to be viable...to be viable, a culture must be capable of actively adapting to emerging realities”.

As discussed in Section 2.3.5 emergent change needs to be people centred and essentially driven from the bottom-up as emergent change is a result of local interactions at micro-level. Culture forms a critical part of a people-centred view and especially from a South African perspective where the workforce is diverse (SAHO 2022). Cultural capacities that are *glocally* focused include management activities, skills and behaviour that foster efficient internal communication with the aim of managing emergent change. Managers and leaders of today are not just tasked with accommodating diversity but need to use diversity to gain a competitive advantage through innovation and creativity (Alfoqahaa and Jones, 2017:886). Increases in diversity result in a need for an increase in integration. As custodians of change,

managers are essentially able to promote integration, coherence and unity with the aim of using diverse workforces as an asset and resource.

Alfoqahaa and Jones' (2017:885-888) research argues that culturally diverse work environments are not chaotic systems themselves but rather systems where culturally diverse work environments lead to conflict. Subsequently, conflict can lead to chaotic situations. This suggests an alternative view of looking at culturally diverse work environments not just as a threat but equally as an opportunity. The Chaos Theory suggests that change is needed for a system to self-organize and with self-organisation new behaviours emerge and an increase in resilience occurs. However, self-organisation cannot be controlled and is as a result of local interactions. Therefore, cultural diversity is equally something that should not be controlled instead it needs to be maintained and facilitated so that it can be used as an opportunity for new forms of order and thus foster an environment where creativity and innovation can occur. This leads to the notion that as facilitators of emergent change in culturally diverse workforces, managers need to have specific skills such as cultural competence, cultural intelligence and cultural humanity.

According to Matthews and Van Wyk (2018:1) "there is limited literature in South Africa on cultural competence", where many companies send their managers for training on cultural tolerance without considering the long-term impact. From both a diversity integration perspective and bearing in mind South Africa's past, cultural tolerance means managers must just "accept" another person's culture – there is no interaction and thus limited understanding. Furthermore, there needs to be an equal shift in the concept of cultural awareness that is not limited to just being "aware". Both the process of cultural acceptance and awareness does not necessarily involve interaction but, however, involves merely an understanding (Burchum 2002).

If cultural diversity is to be harnessed as an asset in internal communication, it must go beyond tolerance, acceptance and awareness towards dynamic interaction. de Guzman *et al.* (2016:1) explains that *cultural competence* is an essential skill for the 21st century and defines cultural competence as:

Cultural competence is the ability of a person to effectively interact, work, and develop meaningful relationships with people of various cultural backgrounds...gaining cultural competence is a lifelong process of

increasing self-awareness, developing social skills and behaviors around diversity...It goes beyond tolerance, which implies that one is simply willing to overlook differences. Instead, it includes recognizing and respecting diversity through our words and actions in all contexts.

The above definition holds insights into the Chaos theory framework from a cultural competence perspective in that as presented, self-organisation involves the iterative process of learning, culture and information. As defined above, cultural competence involves diversity through *words* (information, communication) and *actions* (interaction, learning). Therefore, this places cultural competence as an essential skill and process towards maintaining an organisation at the edge of chaos and subsequently increasing organisational stability, innovation and creativity.

Piotrowski and Stark (2021:1) state that “cultural competence is characterized by a set of skills and developmental experiences” and as defined above, cultural competence includes “action” within all contexts. From the perspective of the study, managers and supervisors’ actions include managing emergent change, using cultural competence skills and using internal communication as a tool for managing emergent change. Like emergent change, learning cultural competence is a process that happens at all levels. Du Plessis and Rivera-Sánchez (2020) believe that to be culturally competent you need to develop *cultural intelligence*, which are the skills the authors propose are needed to communicate effectively and appropriately to culturally diverse workforces with the purpose of harnessing diversity to foster increased self-organisation. du Plessis, Breshears and Rivera-Sanchez (2020:208-2010) offers mindful listening, cultural empathy, mindful reframing, adaptive code-switching and cultural humanity as the cultural intelligence skills needed to develop cultural competence. However, a more simplified explanation of the skills needed to develop cultural intelligence is offered by Earley and Mosakowski (2004) and Van den Bergh (2008:30) and adapted in Table 3.6 below:

Component	Definition
Cognitive	Also referred to as cultural strategic thinking, it is the fundamental knowledge of how to adapt your thinking in a new situation. From the view of du Plessis, Breshears and Rivera-Sanchez (2020) it includes cultural empathy and cultural humanity.
Motivational	Includes the observation and interpretation of certain situations. This includes the mindful reframing and mindful listening as proposed by du Plessis, Breshears and Rivera-Sanchez (2020).
Behavioural	The ability to understand and action the necessary requirements in a cultural situation as referenced in du Plessis, Breshears and Rivera-Sanchez (2020) as adaptive code-switching.

Table 3.2 – Cultural Intelligence Sources (Adaption of Earley and Mosakowski (2004) and Van den Bergh (2008) in comparison to du Plessis, Breshears and Rivera-Sanchez (2020)

As stated, cultural intelligence is the skills needed to develop cultural competence which in turn is a skill needed by managers and supervisors to manage emergent change in culturally diverse organisations. With the impact of globalization and technology, organisations are becoming more and more diverse, with a cultural diversity that changes daily. Lekas et al. (2020:2) agrees and states that “culture is not stagnant, but a changing system of beliefs and values shaped by our interactions with one another, institutions, media and technology, and by the socio-economic determinants of our lives”. This suggests that just possessing cultural competence skills in isolation may be limited, especially from a South African perspective. Agner (2020) states that cultural competence is limited in that “knowing” someone’s cultures can still lead to bias, stereotyping, cultural assumptions as well as misunderstandings.

As presented above in Figure 3.6 cultural humanity is offered as one of the cognitive cultural intelligence sources that adds a new paradigm to cultural competence from a process-orientated view. According to Ungvarsky (2020), cultural humility involves maintaining relationships and the interactions between people, including power imbalances. This suggests a dynamic process of understanding and maintaining

interactions. Cultural humility has been defined as a “lifelong process of self-reflection, self-critique, continual assessment of power imbalances and the development of mutually respectful relationships and partnerships” (Gallardo, 2014:3). While cultural competence is a skill of gaining knowledge of a person’s culture, cultural humility lends more to an iterative and continual process of learning. This essentially falls in line with characteristics of a learning organisation within the Chaos Theory framework as well as a process that can actively adapt to the changing South African culture dynamic. Cultural humility is about “learning *from* cultures rather than learning *about* cultures” and includes a constant process of understanding and interaction (Association, 2017:68).

The Deloitte (2020:6) findings show that diversity has a significant impact on the bottom-line of an organisation, with diverse organisations being “six times more likely to innovate, six times more likely to anticipate change and twice as likely to meet or exceed financial targets”. From this perspective, cultural competence skills, cultural intelligence and cultural humanity in guiding efficient intercultural communication and emergent change at all levels is essential.

ii. Cultural benefits of Self-Organisation, Stigmergy and Swarm Intelligence

Although the researcher has highlighted the limitations of organisational structure on information flow and remaining at the edge of chaos, organisational structure still has a place in the framework of the Chaos Theory. As presented earlier and illustrated in Figure 3.2 the edge of chaos is a dynamic balance between order and chaos and organisational structure is the element of order a system needs to stay at the edge of chaos. However, as much as there are processes put in place to add a necessary element of control, dynamic systems are still impacted by processes that are because of indirect control or coordination. Self-organisation and Stigmergy occur without control and result in higher levels of innovation through collective synergy. This allows systems or organisations to have the ability to automatically make changes and adjustments through local interactions without direct control or supervision.

Christensen (2013:42) offers a practical application and example of Stigmergy from an organisational point of view. Meetings are held to coordinate the tasks of various people or departments to get the “big picture”. However, because an organisation is a

complex system, there is a multitude of details that go into producing outcomes, be it a product or service. These smaller details are too broad to all be dealt with in meetings, emails or through any formal structure. These smaller details are then essentially coordinated through the work itself, through indirect coordination, in other words Stigmergy. Stigmergy cannot be controlled by formal structures or any sort of control, such as policies or procedures. Therefore, Stigmergy forms an essential part of how work gets done. Thus, facilitating the process or creating the environment for Stigmergy to occur becomes important in a dynamic organisation. From an organisational capacity, this process is facilitated through the free flow of information and autonomy that is informed by organisational structures and hierarchy (Garnett, 2019).

As organisations become increasingly complex and the further impact of the 4IR on this complexity, there is more of a need for organisations to reinvent the way they manage change by harnessing “human capital”. In the 2019 Deloitte Human Capital Trends Report for South Africa, entitled “Leading the social enterprise: Reinvent with a human focus” presented various human capital trends that are directly related to the South African workforce. A few of these trends hold specific significance to this study and the relevance to the concept of Chaos Theory in managing change. These trends presented by Deloitte (2019:12) were as follows:

- The “future of the workforce” is diverse and is “complex to manage and lead”.
- The “future of the organisations” is “team-orientated” and less organised around the traditional hierarchy structures.

With regards to the Chaos Theory, these findings emphasize the impact and importance of managing emergent change from local interactions not from a central force as discussed and illustrated in Figure 2.8. These findings suggest that employees are in fact aware of the impact interactions between employees have on management change. Therefore, managers need to move away from attempting to control employees to manage change and instead move towards managing employee connections or interactions to manage emergent change. Hidalgo *et al.* (2007), Englund (2009) and Garnett (2019) agrees and states that you need to create conditions for people to make connections because those initial conditions provide the idea or practice that could lead to resolving a major issue or inventing a new product

or service. Creating *conditions* within an organisation that are conducive to employees making connections is driven by a free flow of communication and information. A system needs information to function at the edge of chaos where the system is at its most adaptive. Bussolari and Goodell (2009:101) and Deloitte (2019:34) adds that the “primary goal of chaos theory is to explain complex systems that consist of a large number of interwoven and mutually interacting elements/activities, it is an especially appropriate model for exploring human behaviour”.

Self-organisation is a key concept within the Chaos Theory and Systems Thinking and for self-organisation to occur change needs to happen. The traditional view of change sees changes a process that needs to be controlled and Zahn (1999:8) explains that these traditional approaches favour centralized, bureaucratic systems that attempts to exert control to manage change to predict future interactions. The Chaos Theory views of control and change challenge this traditional view and suggests that order is not obtained from control from a central position but from the interactions of employees within various levels of the organisations. deJong and deBoer (2003:11) concurs and states that self-organisation creates spontaneous order out of chaos and that “this order is not a result of some central organising force but of (local) interactions between the elements of the system”. One can then assume that central forces such as managers in key positions attempt to use planned change to control. As highlighted throughout the literature, emergent change is too frequent and chaotic to be managed by planned change. From a Chaos Theory perspective, order cannot be created by a central force and therefore, planned change. With local interactions driving strange attractors and therefore driving spontaneous order amidst chaos (self organisation), emergent change is therefore driven by local interactions and not solely from a central force such as senior managers in the hierarchy. Interaction in turn is influenced by factors such as information, culture and learning as presented in Figure 2.7 as part of the Chaos Theory framework covered within self-organisation.

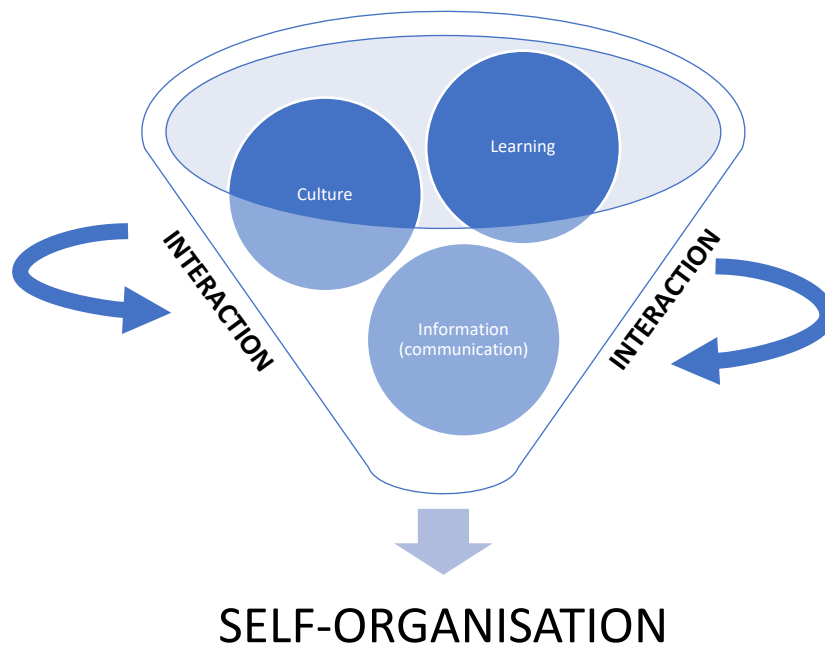


Figure 3.7 – Factors that influence self-organisation in an organisation

Each of these elements have an iterative relationship with each other and furthermore contribute to the ability of a system to self-organize. With self-organisation occurring as a result of changes and interactions, these factors (culture, information and learning) can be used as tools to manage emergent change and thus influence employee behaviour in an organisation. What is important to note is that these three factors that influence self-organisation (culture, information and learning) are not only interdependent but are iterative as well. Borakove (2018) agrees and suggests that interaction and the ability for something to “perform repeatedly”, that learning needs to constantly occur. Just like the bifurcation process in the Chaos Theory, new levels of sophistication in a system are reached when change and “chaos” occurs. Iteration encourages new orders and develops higher levels of sophistication in an organisation and thus places the organisation in a better position to be successful. The Figure 3.8 below presents the iterative, interdependent relationship between these key factors that influence self-organisation.

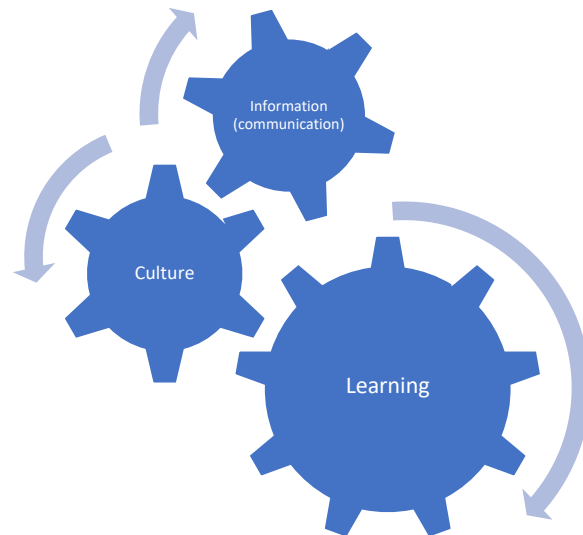


Figure 3.8 – Iterative and interdependent interaction between factors that influence self-organisations

Just like the cogs in a machine, when one cog changes and moves, the other cogs must move and change as well. Thus, changes in one factor, such as managers limiting the flow of information could then change the ability of employees to learn and subsequently have an impact on the view employees have about the organisation (corporate culture). As much as diversity has a significant positive impact on the bottom-line as learned in the Deloitte (2020) findings, it also comes with many challenges. Farnsworth *et al.* (2002) states that diversity can present various challenges such as negative attitudes and behaviours due to prejudices which in turn affect operational efficiency and staff morale. Therefore, these challenges need to be managed or maintained. Just like diversity encourages innovation, so does self-organisation, Stigmergy and swarm intelligence. However, this section of the literature goes beyond defining these concepts and their characteristics in just managing emergent change and shares further insights into their role from a cultural perspective.

Heylighen (2011) refers to a concept of stigmergic self-organisation as an evolutionary process where the unintended collaboration of individuals in a shared environment leads to less social friction. From a South African perspective, herein lies the benefit of Stigmergy and facilitating swarm intelligence. In South Africa's diverse landscape in which social friction is inevitable, Stigmergy could be a resource to not only decrease

cultural barriers but also reduce social friction because of diversity. According to Heylighen (2011) each agent or individual spontaneously focusses on their task which makes it plausible that even different agents or in the context of the study, employees from different cultures or having different views follow a stigmergic process. In other words, even if people are largely different, Stigmergy and swarm intelligence ensures that these actions by individuals are still coordinated into a harmonious whole. Becker (2019) states that swarm intelligence cannot occur in an organisation overnight and requires a corporate culture that supports flexibility as well as hierarchal structures that allow for autonomy and freedom for employees to connect and interact. As stated earlier, Stigmergy is an indirect coordination that cannot be controlled, therefore, flexibility and autonomy are essential factors.

This proposes relevant significance to the ability of Stigmergy to ensure operations continue and finer details are addressed outside of formal instruction, regardless of challenges such as cultural or language barriers. This synergy allows for greater results to occur from collective action, versus if an individual had to do it on their own. However, Stigmergy only occurs in self-organising systems. So, in order to create an environment where Stigmergy occurs, you first need to establish self-organisation thus making the Chaos Theory as a framework essential for creating global order from local interactions.

iii. Context and Shared Meaning in a Learning Organisation

The learning organisation, a principle of the Chaos Theory and organisational learning are terms often used interchangeably where they are believed to mean the same thing. However, they are two separate concepts and hold significance in managing emergent change. Organisational learning is experience based and according to Binesh (2013:282-283) is a reactive process that is about learning and finding solutions to changes after they have happened. This position is seen as more “after the fact” whereas a learning organisation equips employees with the skills to manage change while its occurring. Comstock (2020) states that a learning organisation is more of a proactive process where employees are empowered and encouraged to develop new ideas and share information to respond to changes within an organisation. Culture also plays a critical role in creating a learning organisation.

The Table 3.2 below compares organisational learning and learning organisation in definition, type, type of learning process, managers role and its focus.

	ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING	LEARNING ORGANISATION
DEFINITION	Learning that is based on employee experience and knowledge that is from working in an organisation .	Learning is incorporated into the structure of the organisation and facilitates the development of employee's skills and capacities to better deal with changes.
TYPE	Reactive	Proactive
LEARNING	Learning through the business situation.	Learning through training and capacity development.
MANAGERS RESPONSIBILITY	None	Managers play an active role in developing employees.
FOCUS	Outcome and achievement	Processes and purpose

Table 3.2 – Difference between Organisational learning and learning organisation (Adopted from Örténblad (2001:126-128); Binesh (2013:282-285))

Although the theory of organisational learning is not relatively old and was developed in the late 1970's, it is still a frequently used theory in modern organisations. Authors such as Lopez, Peón and Ordás (2005); Smith (2012); Imran, Ilyas and Aslam (2016); Mallén *et al.* (2016); Saadat and Saadat (2016) all present the importance of organisational learning within businesses. However, organisational learning as defined in Figure 2.15 is a reactive process based on learning from mistakes. The researcher acknowledges the role organisational learning plays in the success of an organisation. However, it is the view of the researcher that organisational learning is limited in its ability to manage emergent change. As presented in Figure 2.15, unlike a learning organisation within the concept of the Chaos Theory, organisational learning is systematic process and assumes learning through “cause-and-effect” – a mistake

happens and only once it has happened, can you learn from it. Throughout the literature it has been highlighted that chaotic, dynamic systems see change occurring through constant interactions and changes and therefore a simple cause-and-effect view is ineffective in managing emergent change. The fact that a learning organisation on the other hand is proactive, process driven and this built into the culture of the organisation makes this principle of the Chaos Theory essential in managing emergent change in dynamic organisations. Not only does the concept of a learning organisations encapsulates a proactive process but it also examines change from a context position.

With internal organisational communication being the means through which employees acquire the necessary knowledge that influences their response to change, Cameron and Green (2015:173) explain that this process of learning is not just merely the acquisition of knowledge but the ability for employees to be able to apply this learned knowledge. The researcher proposes the critical importance of context within the process of learned knowledge. Ortegón-Monroy (2003:391) explains that the Chaos Theory does not examine managing change from a 'problem-solving' perspective but from a 'context-propitiating' approach. Context is the focal point in the Chaos Theory and a manager cannot understand the context of a behaviour without understanding that which informs that behaviour. Context by nature has the same complex properties as a system going through change and has many meanings.

For employees to understand and apply their knowledge they need to not only understand the information but also understand the context of the information to appropriately respond to the changes. According to Airenti and Plebe (2017), context is somewhat of a controversial concept within the study of language but most recently has had a paradigm shift from 'meaning' to focus on the meaning of the speaker. Management often fall into the trap of communicating for the purpose of fulfilling their own needs or when there is a 'big event' or problem that needs to be solved, instead of communicating consistently and communicating what the employees actually need to know (2014). This refers to Figure 2.12 that suggests that planned change from a central role in the hierarchy is unable to manage emergent change as it is essentially driven by local interactions across the organisation.

Context refers to the actual setting in which factors like communication, interaction and emergent change takes place and cannot only establish meaning but can also influence it (DeVito 2005). Within the framework of internal communication and emergent change, the context of the organisation is the environment in which it operates and can be influenced by internal and external forces. With multiple contexts that exist within an organisation it includes four types of contexts: physical; relational; individual and cultural. These contexts increase the complexity of an organisation and influence how a message or interaction is produced, interpreted and coordinated (Gerber and Murphy, 2021). Context is constantly changing according to numerous factors and therefore establishing a set of skills to be contextually competent is challenging. McKenna (2004:674) agrees and suggests that managerial skills “cannot be developed in isolation of context” and considers the development of these behaviour competencies as a waste of money to the organisations that consider these competencies so important.

According to Alfoqahaa and Jones (2017:892), seeing the whole picture is important within the Chaos Theory and managers need to “develop their contextual intelligence”. Khanna (2014:1) defines contextual intelligence as “the ability to understand the limits of our knowledge and to adapt that knowledge to an environment different from the one in which it was developed”. Adaptation within contextual intelligence is the focus and holds significance especially from managing both emergent change and diverse workforces, especially from a South African context where the workforce is extremely diverse and thus there are multitudes of different contextual factors that impact communication and interaction. A learning organisation, a concept within the Chaos Theory, is a proactive approach to learning in dynamic organisations. Equally, contextual intelligence as defined earlier is adaptive and thus also proactive and occurring in real time. Ortegon-Monroy (2003:391) explains that the Chaos Theory does not examine managing change from a ‘problem-solving’ perspective but from a ‘context-propitiating’ approach. Context is the focal point in the Chaos Theory and a manager cannot understand the context of a behaviour without understanding that which informs that behaviour. Context by nature has the same complex properties as a system going through change and has many meanings. According to Booysen (2007:51) “in order to manage the diverse workforce effectively, managers need to understand cultural diversity and need to tailor make their management behaviour to

suit the different contexts and people they are managing”. The cultural competencies, cultural intelligence and cultural humanity presented above in Section 4.6.2a are such skills or competencies that can inform management behaviour in managing context at all levels within the organisation.

In communication and social interactions, the aim is to create shared meaning which is subsequently impacted by the different contextual factors (physical, relational, individual and cultural). Liebhart and Garcia-Lorenzo (2010:217) agrees and states that people’s interactions lead to unpredictable outcomes and difficulties in predicting and therefore, planning beforehand is counterintuitive and the possible reason why change management plans fail. As introduced above, contextual intelligence is paramount in diverse workforces, especially for managers who are tasked to manage emergent change and coordinate internal communication. According to Patrick (2018), leadership and the role of managers in an organisation is a relationship of influence and mutual purpose. The researcher would like to offer an alternative perspective. The role of managers would be a dynamic relationship of influence. The researcher suggests that like symmetrical communication, this role of influence needs to be two-way and dynamic. In other words, just as much as managers influence employees, employees need to be able to influence the manager and thus create mutual purpose and ultimately shared meaning. Shared meaning as described by Héon (2022:para. 5) and Sérieyx (2005) is a collaborative process and context is a prerequisite in the creation of shared meaning.

Kutz (2008:26-27) states that although contextual intelligence is affected by so many variables and in many ways will remain conceptual, there are however, certain behaviours and skills that are associated with developing contextual intelligence. These are as follows: future minded; influencer; ensures an awareness of the mission; socially responsible; culturally sensitive; multicultural leadership; diagnoses context; change agent; effective and constructive use of influence; intentional leadership; critical thinker; and consensus building. These behaviours and skills are all driven by communication and share similarities with the five variables that are needed to create shared meaning.

The researcher offers the Chaos Theory as a framework for the process of developing contextual intelligence and creating shared meaning. Throughout the literature, the

researcher has offered the Chaos Theory as a framework for managing emergent change with internal organisational communication. Shared meaning within the context of facilitating efficient and successful communication is significantly aligned and interrelated within the concept of the Chaos Theory, adding relevance to the study's objectives. Against the backdrop of the five variables essential to create shared meaning as offered by Ford (2022) and Hill (2009). The researcher will present these similarities and the interrelatedness of shared meaning and the behaviours and skills for contextual intelligence against the backdrop of the principles of the Chaos Theory in Table 3.4 below to reinforce the relevance of using the Chaos Theory as a framework.

	Shared Meaning	Contextual Intelligence	Chaos Theory
Transaction	For shared meaning to exist, a dynamic process of communication needs to occur. Feedback needs to exist for it to be considered a transaction (Ford 2022).	• Critical thinker • Intentional leadership	Communication is a "basic requirement" for an organisation to self-organize and communication is essentially a transaction (Stroh 1998b:31).
Interaction	Unlike knowledge sharing and information sharing, shared meaning cannot be created through control, whether by managers or organisational culture. Shared meaning is only created through meaningful	• Influencer • Future minded	Self-organisation is a result of local interaction within a system. Interaction and change has to exist in order for a system to self-organize.

	interactions, just like self-organisation.		
Irreversible and Unrepeatable	Every communication is unique and cannot be repeated. Communication is human-centred and thus even if you can repeat the same words, factors such as how you feel and the situation is different (Hill 2009).	• Diagnosing context • Change agent	Non-linearity and bifurcation within a system suggest that small variances can lead to unpredictable results that cannot be repeated and are irreversible (Cartwright 1991).
Culture Specific	Shared meaning is a result of intercultural communication and interaction amidst all its members.	• Culturally sensitive • Multicultural leadership	Strange attractors such as an organisations' culture and individuals culture create boundaries that pull the system into a visible shape, creating an element of order during chaos (Cartwright 1991).
Content and Relationships	Shared meaning is created by the interaction between people and interaction is determined by the relationship the people communicating have.	• Ensures awareness of the mission • Effective and constructive	Look at the relationship between variables is paramount within the concept of the Chaos Theory. There is a

		use of influence • Consensus building	“landscape of connections” and relationship between seemingly unrelated parts (Wheatley 1994:10).

Table 3.4 – Interrelatedness of shared meaning and contextual intelligence against the backdrop of the Chaos Theory

From the framework of the Chaos Theory and Systems Thinking foundations, self-organisation forms a critical role. Interdependency of a system or interdependency of employees facilitates shared meaning as individuals are given the opportunity to interact and are not isolated. Furthermore, strange attractors, which include organisational culture are a frame of reference to create shared meaning. Additionally, the foundations of the Systems Thinking include self-organisation and creating a learning organisation.

deJong and deBoer (2003:11) concurs and states that self-organisation creates spontaneous order out of chaos and that “this order is not a result of some central organising force but of (local) interactions between the elements of the system”. Shared meaning is only created through meaningful interactions in a dynamic process, to which context is included. The proposed alternative view that the researcher offers firstly, sees managers as facilitators and secondly, that there is a two-way relationship of influence. To create a learning organisation and for context to create shared meaning, employees need to influence the manager just as much as the manager influences the employees. Galacgac and Singh (2015:255) agrees and offers the following view:

And, as a leader, it is important to note that leadership is not delivered by a single individual, but rather, is dependent on the interaction between an agent and its organisation and is constructed from social recognition.

In other words, a symmetrical process of influence leads to a symmetrical process of learning. Equally, and as introduced in Sections 2.4.4.1 (E) and 4.6.1 (c), the process of Stigmergy plays a role in this two-way relationship of influence that creates shared

meaning in contextual complex organisations. The concept of *interaction* and *inter-attraction* are additional concepts within Stigmergy that specifically pertain to this two-way influence in understanding collective behaviour. Defined by Dipple, Raymond and Docherty (2014:4) *interaction* is when one individual's action influences another individual within the group whereas inter-attraction is a "social phenomenon" where people in one group will be attracted to behaviour of other people in the same group. According to Dipple et al. (2014:13):

Behavioural changes to individuals as a result of inter-attraction led to group effect, or an emergent self-organisation. This group effect leads to changes in behavioural responses in individuals to certain stimuli effectively facilitating the collective's ability to evolve managed responses by understanding the shared meaning of a given state of stimuli.

Stigmergy and the social process of interaction and inter-attraction have a direct impact on self-organisation. With Stigmergy and thus self-organisation occurring because of local interaction, the process of two-way influence and shared meaning is iterative. So too is the flow of communication from the viewpoint of the Chaos Theory. Information is what a system needs to maintain it at the edge of chaos to which internal communication at the local level is paramount. Montuori (2000:64-65) states that a change in behaviour is a critical component of learning. This view establishes that for organisational change to occur, there needs to be a change in behaviour:

A learning organisation is most likely to recognize and respond to any changes brewing in its environment. This phenomenon of environmental change-organisational recognition/response is the driving force behind organisational longevity.

Added to this is that to create self-organisation, change needs to occur and for organisational learning to occur, there needs to be changes in behaviour. This then suggests a constant process of change and learning to manage emergent change. Montuori (2000) explains that there needs to be a change in behaviour for a system or individual to learn and therefore foster a learning organisation. Therefore, managing human interaction or as the researcher proposes "maintaining" emergent change through the facilitation of internal communication is a process that could see managers

and supervisors using specific cultural competencies (that will be presented in Chapter 5) to facilitate the process of emergent change from a *glocal* South African perspective.

iv. Symmetrical Communication

As highlighted throughout the literature and illustrated in Figure 3.2 information and thus communication is one of the critical components of self-organisation and maintaining a system at the edge of chaos. The previous Section 4.6.1 highlighted information flow and the impact organisational structure has on information flow. This section will highlight the information flow and communication from more of a people-centred and people-driven approach, which evidently includes culture. The Chaos Theory and self-organisation explains that for a system to self-organize and renew, information serves as its lifeblood. One could then say that communication is the lifeblood of self-organising organisations. Flower (1993:51) agrees and states that “a free flow of information...is what living systems use to transform themselves”.

The Chaos Theory suggests a maintenance view of communication given that the edge of chaos and emergent change is a dynamic, nonlinear process. The dynamic balance and maintenance of information and interaction keeps a system at the perfect balance between order and chaos. Equally, according to Jakubiec (2019:3), communication also “maintains and sustains relationships”. Since energy, in the form of information and action is what is needed to maintain a system at the edge of chaos and correspondingly, internal communication is the process of sharing information that maintains and sustains relationships, one can conclude that internal communication is the critical factor in maintaining an organisation at the edge of chaos.

From the perspective of maintenance, symmetrical internal communication is critical to an organisation’s success in insuring open, two-way communication that is meaningful and impactful in managing emergent change. Men and Sung (2019:5-6) adds that symmetrical internal communication is used as a tool to influence and adjust behaviours and thinking versus controlling and manipulating. As discussed in Chapter 2, managers tend to use control as a resource or tool to manage emergent change and exert more control when they feel they have no control. They rely on formal communication structures and the flow of communication that is determined by company policy and procedures. This counterintuitive process lends more of an

asymmetrical process of communication within the perspective of command-control. Men and Sung (2019:5-6) further adds that symmetrical internal communication aims to achieve balance of interests between employees and management and “achieve long-term and mutually beneficial relationships...and fosters participative organisational culture”.

The use of control during the flow of information as mentioned above is a limiting factor from a Chaos Theory perspective in maintaining an organisation at the edge of chaos. Notwithstanding the impact formal structures and policies and procedures have on controlling the flow of information, the flow is equally determined by the control at the local level. Similarly, the flow of information is also impacted by the quantity of information as well as the time it takes for the information to flow. As proposed by Theodoridis (2009:101-104), how a manager deals with complexity at the local level is determined by factors that affect the flow and the quantity of information under three views: complexity reduction; complexity absorption and complexity adaption. These views propose that when managers try reducing complexity by limiting connections and controlling the flow of information, this counterintuitive process has a detrimental effect on managing emergent change. As suggested, complexity adaption sees both managers and employees in a process of co-evolving to gather information and thus a two-way, dynamic process of creating shared meaning. This process places emphasis on communication that is both dynamic, developed and shared through interaction as well as co-evolving.

Over and above the amount of information that is controlled, is equally the impact of time in the flow of information that has a direct impact on the role communication can play in managing emergent change. As initially introduced in Chapter 2, time delays are inherent in any system and refer to the time it takes between the cause and the subsequent effect. From a communication perspective, it is the time it takes for the information to flow or how long it takes for the physical transfer of the information to occur. Bearing in mind that the edge of chaos is a state of transition and information and interaction (energy) is required to keep a system at the edge of chaos, time delays need to be limited. Delays in information essentially impact the amount of energy flowing into the system to keep it at the edge of chaos. A break in the flow of information as a result of time delays could result in the ability to the system to remain at the edge of chaos. Sterman (1989:322) offers an alternative view to time delays and

opine that time delays occur when there are changes in the conditions of choice. For employees to make choices they need access to information. This implies that if information is limited, it can influence choice and therefore the impact and outcome of changes. Managers as change agents have a direct and indirect influence on this process and therefore an influence on time delays. Sterman (1989:322) explains that there are lags or time delays between “initiation of a control action and its effect...the duration of these lags may vary and may be influenced by the manager's own actions”. As mentioned earlier, complexity adaptation and ensuring a free flow of information is a two-way process by both managers and employees. If managers limit the flow and amount of information and thus influence “choice” could subsequently affect the ability of the system to remain at the edge of chaos.

However, as complex as open systems, like organisations are, there are elements of the system that through interaction provide boundaries in which the system can operate and therefore allow for flexibility. One of these factors that are relevant to the impact of the flow of information is equifinality¹⁶. The term was first introduced in Chapter 1 on systems (2.2.1) and was one of the complex system factors that a system should aim to achieve during interactions with its environment. According to Lee (1998:182) the process of equifinality within an organisation and specially the superior-subordinate relationship holds relevant significance to the study in that change can be managed from a “variety of ways or feedback methods from differing entropic¹⁷ moments”. This suggests an inherent flexibility in complex systems to reach the end goal through various means and suggests that there is no right or wrong way as long as there is input. In other words a free flow of communication. Goldin-Meadow (2008:184-185) agrees and suggest that human communication naturally gravitates towards resilience and no matter the input that “all roads lead to Rome”. This profoundly suggests the importance of input and thus information quantity and flow. Information and thus input is the energy required to maintain a system at the edge of chaos and therefore if there is input, the edge of chaos can be reached from different paths.

¹⁶ A point where a system reaches the same state from different paths or conditions. MELE, C., PELS, J. & POLESE, F. 2010. A Brief Review of Systems Theories and Their Managerial Applications. *Service Science*, 2, 126-135.

¹⁷ Pertaining to entropy or the measure to which is system is random or chaotic MERRIAM-WEBSTER 2022a. *Entropy*. Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary,.

4.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, Chapter 2 and 3 of the study have methodically addressed the objectives of the study. To meet the study's aims, objectives and to contextualise the research, Chapter 2 provided a thorough overview of the literature. In particular, it investigated how well internal organisational communication manages emergent change, examined existing internal organisational communication models from a glocal standpoint and evaluated how well current communication processes work at different hierarchical levels. It also pointed out gaps in the research, particularly with regard to objective two, which examined the suitability of the models of communication that are currently in use.

Chapter 3 of the study presented the conceptual framework against the backdrop of the literature framed in Chapter 2. The chapter addressed objective four by investigating the application of Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into internal communication systems, drawing on the gaps from Chapter 2 that had been discovered. Serving as a theoretical structure and through a Chaos Theory lens, the chapter in essence synthesises existing literature, highlights gaps in the literature and suggests a framework for further research to address these gaps.

Chapter 4 will present the research methodology used in this study to determine the efficiency of current internal organisational communication processes within the various hierarchical levels of the selected organisation providing insights into the empirical approach undertaken to address the study's research objectives. Furthermore, the literature in Chapter 2 and 3 provided valuable insights that informed the development of research tools for this study. Based on the findings presented in the chapter, the study will recommend the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The literature review for this study was comprehensively examined in Chapter 2, while Chapter 3 presented the conceptual framework of the study. Chapter 2 presented the three distinct theoretical frameworks; namely, systems thinking, internal communication and emergent change while Chapter 3 addressed the literature's fourth objective within the conceptual framework. The development of the research instruments were informed by the literature presented in Chapters 2 and 3 with the aim to explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into internal communication processes.

Chapter 4 outlines the rationale for the chosen research methodology used by the study. The chapter will also discuss the research design and research steps, including the sampling method used to gather information for the study. According to Sarantakos (2005:86) social research is a tool for learning about interconnections and giving researchers a way to discover, document and explain these interconnections. This knowledge then leads to innovation.

4.2 Research Design

The purpose of the research design is to provide a structured framework to collect and analyse data according to the aims and objectives of the study. Research by nature is a systematic process and according to Asenahabi (2019:76) plays an important role in advancing knowledge and contributes to innovation. The general purpose of research is to explore the relationship between variables and the research design is the guide through which data were collected and analysed. According to Durrheim (2004:33), research design acts as bridge between the research questions or objectives and the execution of the research. The research design provides a specific plan of execution on how the research will be carried out.

An important aspect of research design is deciding on the purpose of research. There are two types of research methods; namely, basic or fundamental research and applied research. Both these methods are distinct, each having a clear outcome.

According to Indeed (2021a:para. 2), a basic research method involves adding or expanding to existing knowledge and applied research involves practical solutions that can solve problems. With internal communication being highlighted as an issue in South Africa and the evident gaps in the literature for using internal communication as a resource in dealing with emergent change, the researcher will be using an applied research method. Durrheim (2004:33) adds that applied research aims to generalise the findings and to offer the researcher solutions to the problem under study. Additionally, the pragmatic research paradigm coincides with the applied research method in solving real world problems.

Basic and applied research is further divided into three categories; namely, quantitative, qualitative and mixed method approaches. Mostly used in social sciences, quantitative research is logical and statistically based and this in turn makes this research method unbiased. Quantitative research focuses on achieving objectivity, generalizability and reliability. Boru (2018) states that the benefit and strength of quantitative research lies in its ability to be generalised to a larger population as well as the data being reliable and quantifiable meaning that it is created through objectivity and Williams (2007:65) states that “data is used to objectively measure reality”.

In applying the principles of pragmatic philosophy to the research design, Kelly and Cordeiro (2020:6) explain that it contributes relevant, valuable and actionable knowledge to the field and research.

4.2.1 Non-experimental

The type of methods used in quantitative research are determined by the design of the research. According to Thyer (2012:22-25) there are three types of design or approaches; namely, experimental; quasi-experimental and non-experimental. Experimental research involves the intervention and manipulation of variables by the researcher whereas a non-experimental research design studies a phenomenon the way it is naturally without any manipulation by the researcher. Price *et al.* (2021:1) state that the choice between these two different approaches largely depends on the research question. The authors continue to explain that a non-experimental design is preferred under the following circumstances: when the research question is about a single variable; there is a noncausal statistical relationship between variables; there is

casual relationship between variables that cannot be manipulated; and when the research question is broad or exploratory. Lapan and Quartaroli (2009) further adds that in social research certain variables are attribute variables, such as age, gender and position in the organisation. These variables cannot be manipulated.

For this study, the researcher will be using the non-experimental design as the variables under study will not be manipulated, includes more than one attribute independent variable and will be studied as they appear naturally. The benefit of a non-experimental design, according to Jeffrey *et al.* (2017) is that it can offer “solid conclusions” about the different groups in a study as well as the various associations within the group. Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:65-66) propose that the non-experimental research can be classified into two dimensions; namely: purpose (dimension one) and time (dimension two). Non-experimental research classified by purpose is either based on descriptive, predictive or explanatory research. The researcher’s purpose is descriptive due to the nature of the study and the gaps in the literature and asks the question “how” or “how well” does something work. In the case of this study, the researcher investigates how well internal communication manages emergent change and how well current management models and management skills empower managers as change agents.

The second classification method as proposed by Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:66) is classification of non-experimental research by time. By time it means when data were collected and over what course of time. Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:66-70) continue to propose that there are three categories of classification based on time; namely: cross-sectional; longitudinal and retrospective. David and Sutton (2007:135) adds that the most recognisable research design within the context of social research is a cross-sectional design which is a non-experimental classification based on time. Shaushnessy *et al.* (2009:154) states that a cross-sectional design is when “one or more samples are drawn from the population at one time”. The cross-sectional design allows for data to be collected at multiple cases but at a single point in time where groups are not randomly selected. Furthermore, a cross-sectional design representing the present whereas a longitudinal and retrospective designs represent the future and past respectively. In exploring the relationship and the subsequently impact that internal communication has on managing emergent change in modern organisations,

the research will make use of a non-experimental cross-sectional design where independent variables are viewed as they exist within the organisation.

4.2.2 Variables

According to Sarantakos (2005:73) irrespective of whether you use quantitative or qualitative research, social research involves some form of measurement. To measure something, you need to assign a value to it and follow a systematic process that follows the rules of measurement. However, variables need to first be identified. A variable is defined as something that can change or vary or alternatively can have more than one value (Kaur, 2013:36-37). For a researcher to determine the relationship between variables and subsequently how they are related to each other, the researcher needs to accurately define the variables in the study. Sarantakos (2005:73) state that there are two basic rules with regards to variables: they need to relate to one concept only; and they must be measurable. Variables are further divided into different types. These types and definitions are tabled below:

Type of Variable	Definition
Dependent Variable	Is affected or explained by another variable
Independent Variable	Causes changes or explains another variable
Extraneous Variable	Variables that are 'outside' the research question
Discrete Variable	Uses whole units, for example, gender.
Demographic Variable	Depends on the nature of the design and can be dependent, independent or discrete.

Table 4.1 – Types of variables in social research (Sarantakos, 2005:75)

Often researchers cannot control the independent variables in research. In non-experimental research it becomes challenging to ascertain the cause-and-effect relationship of the variables while analysing a phenomenon as it naturally occurs. Thomas (2020:1) explains that in non-experimental research, the researcher cannot manipulate the independent variable and “must find already-existing examples of the independent variable and investigate how changes in this variable affect the dependent variable”.

4.3 Target Population

The target population is a technical term used to describe the units that the sample represents in the study (de Vaus, 2014:66). The unit of analysis for this study and target population is an automotive industry group in South Africa. According to Holmes (2021:1) the selected company under study has a total of five divisions in the KwaZulu-Natal province. Furthermore, the company under study has six brands incorporated into these five divisions. The study will focus on the following levels of management and staff: Directors; Foremans; Executives; Managers and Supervisors and selected general staff that report to these respective managers. Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:89-90) explain that information from the sample allows the researcher to gain insights into applying that knowledge to the population.

4.4 Sampling Method

Survey research is based on a sample of the population and therefore ensuring that the correct sampling method used for the study is imperative. It is important that the population is represented by the sample under study to ensure data produces generalizable results. Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:88) agree and state that it is important for the researcher to create a sample that best represents the population so that the values generated can “produce meaningful conclusions about the population.” There are two types of sampling methods – probability and non-probability sampling. Probability sampling is when the researcher or the sample itself has no discretion in who takes part in the study, whereas, non-probability sampling the researcher has the discretion to choose (de Vaus 2014:88). This study will be using the non-probability sampling method.

There are various types of sampling methods according to Sarantakos (2005:86): Convenience; purposive; quota; theoretical; and snowball sampling. Convenience sampling is the least reliable and there is no control, while snowball sampling requires referrals in what is seen as a recruitment process. Purposive sampling is when a researcher chooses the sample based on their relevance to the study (Sarantakos 2005:86). This type of sampling method does not choose the sample randomly. According to Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:53) purposive sampling improves the population validity of a study through representativeness of the sample. Due to the nature of the study in examining independent variables within the various hierarchal

levels of the organisation under study, two different sampling strategies for these hierarchical levels will be used.

For staff in management positions as described in target population (Directors, Foremans, Managers and Executives), the inclusion criteria was based on management positions within the organisation under study. The study made use of the criterion sampling method. Cohen and Crabtree (2006:1) define criterion sampling as a sample selected “based on a pre-established criterion” with the benefit of the researcher being able to study the criteria in depth and gain information rich data. The literature review outlined the role managers play as gatekeepers to emergent change and the criterion for choosing this sample is on their management position within the organisation under study and subsequently their role in the vertical flow of information between the board and general staff.

Maximum variation sampling will be used for general staff in the study. Maree (2016:86) defines maximum variation sampling as a “deliberate strategy to include participants which vary widely from each other”. The researcher will include characteristics such as language, age, gender, race and job title. The exclusion criteria will be for staff that do not have a permanent contract or who are contracted staff from a third party. According to Siegle (2021:1) the maximum variation in a study adds value in that it can reveal common patterns and adds diversity to the study. Maximum variation and criterion sampling will be used in the study concurrently. Palinkas *et al.* (2015:1) states that “combining sampling strategies may be more appropriate to the aims of implementation researcher and more consistent with recent developments in quantitative methods”.

4.5 Measuring Instrument

The value of any research depends on the quality of the data collected and therefore, the instrument used to collect the data. According to Shaushnessy *et al.* (2009:154) one of the primary research instruments in survey research is a questionnaire and it is a powerful research instrument tool when used correctly. Within survey research, scales are used by researchers to measure how respondents think or feel. According to Maree (2016:186) scales assist the researcher in discovering the attitude of the

respondent and are set up in a way that the variables can be expressed in a numerical score for analysis. A structured questionnaire will include a section of biographical data to determine the respondents age, gender, race, job title and division in which the respondent works. According to Maree (2016:184) biographical data is “important to determine the profile to compare the sample... and to explore possible relationships between biographical variables and other variables in the study”.

The questionnaire will also examine and analyse the data by incorporating measures of central tendency. Central tendency measures are essential for assessing construct validity in research as well as providing insights into the consistency of responses within a specific item or a set of items related to a construct (Chen *et al.*, 2005:273-303). A consistent pattern of responses across a group indicates good construct validity. The questionnaire was designed to calculate central tendency measures for each question, categorizing responses based on the response scale and examining these measurements for construct validity.

The questionnaire items that are classified according to the particular measures of central tendency that they are intended to evaluate are contained in Annexure B. The questionnaire's questions are all carefully matched to specific measures of central tendency, which makes it easier to examine the participants' perspectives on a variety of important concepts in an organised manner. The implementation of a structured strategy guarantees coherence and clarity in the data collection process thereby facilitating a targeted inquiry into the subtleties of employee experiences concerning information flow, control mechanisms and compliance with Chaos Theory principles.

To determine how centred the distribution of the study's constructs is, central tendency measurements were used. The study's constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale where 1 represents "Strongly disagree" and 5 represents "Strongly agree". According to SurveyMonkey (2021:1), the Likert scale is used to gauge the opinions and feelings of respondents as well as an appropriate method to understand “specific feedback”. The questionnaire will be interviewer-administered. According to Tsakos *et al.* (2008:2) interviewer-administered questionnaires have a higher response rate.

4.6 Data Analysis

The questionnaire includes closed ended questions. The researcher will be making use of statistical software to analyze the data and will be making use of IBM® SPSS® statistics software version 28.0. According to IBM (2021b:1) SPSS® software “enables you to quickly dig deeper into your data, making it a much more effective tool”. The study made use of a multifaceted data analysis approach. Four primary methods were used in the analysis: cross-tabulation, analysis of variance (ANOVA), chi-square test and descriptive statistics. To provide a clear picture of the distributions and central tendencies of the important variables under investigation, descriptive statistics were used. A variety of measures, including mean, median and mode were calculated to describe the variability and average values in the dataset.

An important technique for investigating possible variations in change management results amongst different internal communication practices was ANOVA. ANOVA made it possible to identify statistically significant differences in perceived effectiveness between mean effectiveness ratings across various organisational departments, providing insights into the varying effects of communication strategies on change initiatives. The advantage of using ANOVA is that it can be used to ascertain whether the means of more than two groups differ in a way that is statistically significant (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007:90).

To find correlations between categorical factors pertaining to internal communication methods and employee opinions on the efficacy of change management, cross-tabulation analyses were utilised. This method provided detailed insights into the connections between employee engagement levels, communication channels and the success of change projects by building contingency tables and analysing frequency distributions. Cross-tabulation, according to White (2003:179), enhances construct and content validity by simplifying the analysis of frequency distributions and correlations between different variables. To find out if there is a significant correlation between two category variables, the chi-square test is frequently utilised. It evaluates if there is a significant difference between the observed frequencies of the categories in the variables and the predicted frequencies in the absence of any relationship between the variables (Franke *et al.*, 2012:449).

4.7 Pretesting

According to Sarantakos (2005) a pre-test is used to test the mechanical structure of the questionnaire. Pretesting the questionnaire ensures that it will function properly and allows the researcher to pinpoint any errors or challenges with respondents answering the questions. Furthermore, it determines if the respondents have interpreted the questionnaire in a way that the research was intended. Ruel et al. (2016:116) propose that pretesting the research instrument increases credibility and accountability as a researcher.

The pretesting procedure will be conducted as a field test. Due to the nature of the study and having two distinct groups of participants and therefore two separate questionnaires, the researcher will be making use of cognitive interviewing for the pretest. The pretest sample aims to include 4-6 respondents. The respondents will be chosen to include a diverse range of age, gender, race, job title and education level to ensure that the pretest is representative of the population. de Klerk *et al.* (2020:4) state that the benefit of using cognitive interviewing is that it involves “answering questionnaires in order to improve the design of the questionnaire, minimize response error and improve content validity”. The researcher will be using the *think aloud interviewing* technique.

4.8 Delimitations and Scope

The study will be limited to the group’s five divisions and will exclude the group’s Executive Committee and Executive Council. With each division having its own director and management structure, the scope of the study will be segmented according to the group’s five divisions. However, the researcher will also be analysing common patterns based on group communication from Head Office.

4.9 Validity and Reliability

Reliability is the method that is used to establish the trustworthiness within the study. These methods include internal, external and construct validity, reliability and objectivity.

4.9.1 Internal Validity

Cause-and-effect relationships are often not reflected in the research because they are affected by confounding variables and not independent variables. According to Thomas (2020:1), confounding variables are an “unmeasured, third variable” and need to be accounted for the internal validity of the research. The risk of not accounting for the impact of confounding variables could mean that the impact of certain extraneous variables is either under- or overestimated. With the study researching the impact of internal communication on emergent change and the role managers play in the process, the study will be influenced by numerous extraneous variables. Lapan and Quartaroli (2009:198) state that triangulation validation occurs when the researcher uses more than one data source as well as more than one method of information collection – often referred to as source and method triangulation.

4.9.2 External validity

External validity refers to the ability of a study to be generalized. Sarantakos (2005:86) state that the sampling method used in the study can increase the external validity of the study through a sample that is well represented. Through purposive sampling the researcher will achieve population validity and therefore external validity.

4.9.3 Construct and Content Validity

Construct validity essentially refers to determining whether the instrument or measurement used in research actually measures what it promises to measure and is consistent with the theoretical concept and in the case of this study the conceptual framework (Peter, 1981:133). It assesses whether the measurement fairly represents the hypothetical or abstract concept under investigation. Content Validity on the other hand describes the degree to which a measurement tool sufficiently captures every facet of the construct or idea that it is intended to assess (Roebianto et al., 2023:5-7). Essentially, content validity evaluates whether all of the behaviours, abilities or traits that characterise the relevant concept are represented by the instrument's items.

The survey (Appendix A) was created with the conceptual framework of the study in mind. Construct validity, according to Peter (1981:134), is the congruence of the study's constructs - which are referred to as unobservable variables described at a conceptual level - and the survey questions used to derive a quantifiable measure of that construct. Central tendency measures are a crucial tool for assessing construct

validity in research. They provide insights into the consistency of responses within a specific item or set of items related to a construct. A consistent pattern of responses across a group indicates good construct validity. If the mean, median or mode aligns with theoretical expectations, it supports the construct validity of the measurement tool (Chen *et al.*, 2005:275).

Furthermore, to make sure that the variables under study accurately represented the relevant theoretical constructs, ANOVA was used to compare means among several groups. Furthermore, the external validity of the results was improved by the constant use of ANOVA across a variety of population subgroups, indicating that the findings may be applied to a larger sample size (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007:22). Apart from ANOVA, cross-tabulation was utilised as a unique analytical method to investigate the connections among the categorical variables in the dataset. According to White (2003:179), cross-tabulation improved construct and content validity by making it easier to examine frequency distributions and relationships between various variables. It improved knowledge of the sample characteristics and their significance for the research outcomes by offering insightful information about dependencies or patterns in the observed data. In particular, this approach was helpful in determining possible correlations between demographic characteristics and important research variables; it also ensured that the assessment tool appropriately captured the relevant underlying constructs, which are consistent with construct validity.

4.9.4 Reliability

Reliability is a quality measurement in research that measures the accuracy of the instrument and how consistent the instrument would be if repeated (Heale & Twycross 2015). The researcher improves the reliability of the study through internal consistency. The questionnaire includes various questions that have the same focus.

Objectivity is achieved in the study when the research remains uninfluenced by the researcher's bias, views and values. According to Holmes (2020:7) researchers need to distance themselves from the study so that the findings are based on the nature of the study and not influenced by the researcher's personality and views.

4.10 Anonymity and Confidentiality

On the 1st of July 2021, the *Protection of Personal Information Act (POPI Act)* No. 4 of 2013 was enacted in South Africa. The purpose of the act is to protect South Africans with regards to their constitutional right to privacy and governs the processing and storage of personal information (POPIA 2021:1).

The POPI Act also applies to research and the processing of data for research purposes. According to Adams *et al.* (2021:1)

“Within the research setting, POPIA regulates the processing of personal information for research purposes, and the flow of data across South Africa’s borders to ensure that any limitations on the right to privacy are justified and aimed at protecting other important rights and interests”.

However, there are certain exclusions, exemptions and exceptions with regards to processing information for research purposes. For this study, the exclusion relates to processing “de-identified” information. According to Adams *et al.* (2021:3) and POPIA (2021:1) “de-identified” information is defined as:

“de-identify”, in relation to personal information of a data subject, means to delete any information that— (a) identifies the data subject; (b) can be used or manipulated by a reasonably foreseeable method to identify the data subject; or (c) can be linked by a reasonably foreseeable method to other information that identifies the data subject.

The researcher will not be collecting the name and surname of the respondents and therefore, the respondent will not be able to be identified both in the collection of data and presentation of data. The respondents will be allocated a respondent number for the purpose of processing and analysing the data.

According to Dullabh (2021:para. 1), the POPI Act is still in its infancy and the regulator is still to clarify specific terms such as “de-identified” information. However, the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) also includes the concept of de-identification and has clearly defined these terms. Carrying out a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) can be used by the researcher to assess whether the respondent’s data can be re-identified. The “motivated intruder-test” is a DPIA test used to determine if information is in fact de-identified. PDPC (2013:21) states that the motivated intruder-test:

“Considers whether individuals can be re-identified from the anonymised data by someone who is motivated, reasonably competent, has access to standard resources such as the Internet and published information such as public directories, and employs standard investigative techniques such as making enquiries of people who may have additional knowledge of the identity of the data subject.”

In the case of this study and due to the sensitivity of the information, the employees/respondents within the organisation under study need to be kept anonymous. The researcher will be making use of third parties to carry out the motivated intruder-test. According to Edinburgh (2023:1) “the ‘motivated intruder’ is going to be a person who starts without any prior knowledge but who wishes to identify the individual whose personal data you have anonymised”. To adhere to the POPI Act, the motivated intruder test will be carried out both at the pre-test phase as well as data collection. Furthermore, the participants will be given informed consent documents before data were collected, where the participants will be informed of the level of privacy and confidentiality that will be upheld in the study. The researcher will also emphasize that due to respondents’ data being de-identified, the respondents’ responses will not be able to be identified by the employer, representatives of the employer or by external intruders.

4.11 Ethical Considerations

The Durban University of Technology (DUT) prescribed ethical process will be ensured for the study. This includes voluntary participation by the participants, adhering to the POPI Act, anonymity and informed consent by the participants. Ethical clearance was awarded by the DUT Faculty of Management Sciences: Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC). A copy of this clearance certificate is attached (Annexure A). In addition, gate keepers’ letter has been obtained from the organisation under investigation in which the ethical considerations are outlined. This includes the agreement that the company under investigation will not be known.

4.12 Conclusion

During the literature review phase, the study gathered insights that were used significantly in the development of the research instruments. A thorough grasp of the

main ideas, theories and empirical data pertaining to the study issue was provided by the literature review, which focused in particular on the integration of Chaos Theory into internal communication procedures and cultural diversity in organisations. First, the selection of relevant variables and constructs to be measured in the study instruments was led by the literature review. Through a comprehensive review of the literature, the investigator determined the key aspects of cultural variety and the fundamental ideas of Chaos Theory that would guide the investigation. The creation of certain research instrument elements and questions was also influenced by the literature review. The research customised survey questions to effectively capture the subtleties and intricacies noted in the literature.

In order to achieve both representation and practicality, the researcher described the target population and the sample strategy. The chapter also described how the study abided by the new POPI Act's provisions, guaranteeing the protection of participants' personal information. An important part of the study will be Chapter 5, wherein the gathered data will be systematically presented and carefully examined through the use of graphical aids. Key linkages and patterns within the dataset will be highlighted through these visualisations. Furthermore, this chapter will go beyond a simple description to explore the underlying mechanics and implications of the patterns in the observed data. The chapter will provide significant insights into the results' wider importance by critically assessing the findings in light of the earlier stated theoretical frameworks and research aims.

CHAPTER 5

DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The methodology approach and descriptions were thoroughly reviewed in the preceding chapter and aligned with the overall aims and objectives of the study. Using this framework as a foundation. This chapter goes into great detail on the information gathered via questionnaires and the analysis done with IBM® SPSS® statistics software. The questionnaire design was carefully outlined in relation to four research objectives and in line with the study's aim, which is to explore the role of internal organisational communication in managing emergent change within a selected automotive group in KwaZulu-Natal. The findings are organised in a way that aligns with these aims and the study objectives, with the results been presented in the same sequence as the following study objectives:

- To determine the efficiency of internal organisational communication in managing emerging change.
- To examine the appropriateness of current models of internal organisational communication from a *glocal* perspective.
- To determine the efficiency of current internal organisational communication processes within the various hierarchical levels of the selected organisation under study.
- To explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes.

The descriptive data were presented in multiple formats, including tables, graphs, cross-tabulation analysis and frequency tables, providing a thorough representation of the dataset. Various aspects such as demographic information, communication methods and central tendency measurements are examined. This study uses inferential statistical methods such as Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), in addition to descriptive statistics. These methods are applied to identify differences in perspectives among various levels of the organisational structure. The thorough testing of every

study aim adds to the analysis's depth. Additionally, the chi-square test was conducted. However, when the chi-square test findings were compared to those from the ANOVA and cross-tabulation studies, no new insights were revealed. Consequently, it was excluded in the analysis going forward, based on the chi-square test results' redundancy in comparison to the insights from the ANOVA and cross-tabulation analyses. As a result, the study did not present the results of the chi-square test.

Chapter 5 will close the knowledge gap between the research objectives and empirical data by providing an analysis of the management of emergent change within the KwaZulu-Natal automotive group and culturally appropriate internal communication techniques. The study's overall objectives are furthered by using this dual-method approach, which aims to provide a comprehensive knowledge of employee viewpoints within the organisational context.

5.2 Response Rate

In total, 89 questionnaires were completed and interviewers administered. This was drawn from a population size of 237. Of the population size of 237, the initial sample size was 137 which excluded respondents that met the exclusion criteria as outlined in Section 5.4. These exclusion criteria included: contract staff; trainees and staff on learnerships; respondents that have been with the company for less than 6 months; or who are contracted staff from a third party. This initial sample size also excluded 18 respondents that were a part of the pilot study. This yielded a response rate of 65%. The response rate was calculated as follows:

$$89 / 137 = 0.65$$

$$0.65 \times 100 = 65\%$$

The researcher encountered the following limitations that affected the response rate: access to respondents and managements exclusion of these staff members due to operational requirements; and respondents that were on annual leave and were off on sick leave. According to Fincham (2008: 25) a minimum of a 60% response rate should be the goal for researchers, with an aim of 80% being the ideal.

PART ONE:
DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

5.3 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics will be a key tool in summarising the results based on the themes that emanated from the literature research helping to reveal the patterns within the data. As the foundation of statistical analysis, descriptive statistics offer a methodical way to investigate and shed light on a dataset's characteristics. They provide a wide range of methods and measurements to identify important features including central tendencies, variations and distributions. The first section of the data presentation will concentrate on offering information on communication tools, central tendency measurements and respondent demographics. The researcher hopes to learn important information that will improve our comprehension of the complex dynamics of information and communication in our quickly changing environment through the use of descriptive statistics.

Furthermore, this component of the study will employ cross-tabulation analysis to investigate how different demographic dimensions - specifically, race and gender - perceive communication inside the organisation. The examination will explore different central tendency measurements, illuminating the ways in which people's perceptions differ according to their gender and ethnic identities. The study attempts to provide nuanced insights into how communication dynamics, organisational control mechanisms and adaptive principles appear across a range of demographic groupings by analysing these variables in the context of race and gender. In light of the importance of cultural diversity inside the organisation, this analysis is especially crucial to achieving the study's cultural objectives. It is imperative to comprehend the nuances in communication dynamics amongst personnel of different ethnic and gender backgrounds in order to cultivate an inclusive organisational culture. In order to develop methods for advancing cultural diversity, equity and effectiveness within the organisational framework, the study uses this analysis to find probable discrepancies or patterns in communication efficacy and organisational dynamics.

5.3.1 Demographic information

This section presents the profile of the respondents. Frequency tables are used to describe the demographic profile of the respondents. In this section, the demographics include gender, age, ethnic cultural group, language (first and second), the highest level of education, position in the company, division/branch and department. The sample consisted of 89 respondents divided into two groups (managers and staff). The demographic results are presented below.

	Management		Staff	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Male	25	96,2	45	72,6
Female	1	3,8	17	27,4
Total	26	100	62	100
Missing			1	
Total			63	

Table 5.1 - Gender

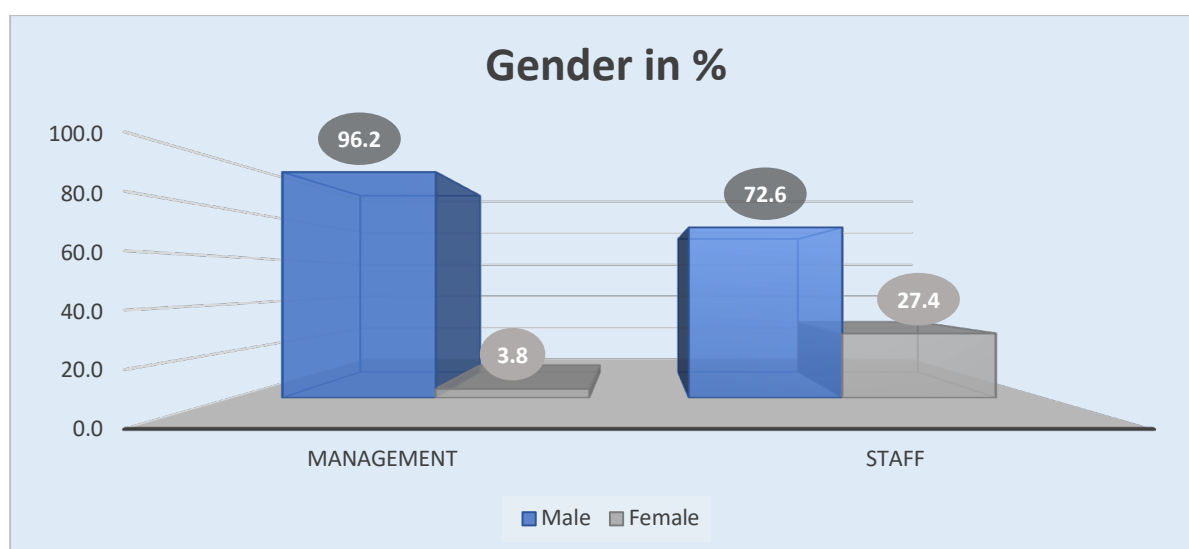


Figure 5.1 - Gender

The gender distribution of the participants in the study is shown in Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1, providing a statistical breakdown of the trends seen. According to the data, 96.2% of respondents in the management category identify as men, which is a sizable majority. Comparatively, the majority of respondents who are staff members (72.6%) identify as men. It is significant to notice that the gender disparity in the sample highlights how underrepresented women are and this raises awareness of the issue.

When evaluating subtle gender-related patterns, trends or impacts, this gender skew in the dataset, notably the considerable underrepresentation of women may have repercussions for the validity of the study. The literature confirms this underrepresentation of women, especially in the motor industry under study and adds to the many gender-related challenges within the workplace (Segal, 2018)

	Management		Staff	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Coloured	1	3,8	3	4,8
White	13	50	13	20,6
Indian	12	46,2	22	34,9
Zulu			24	38,1
Xhosa			1	1,6
Total	26	100	63	100

Table 5.2 - Ethnic Cultural Group

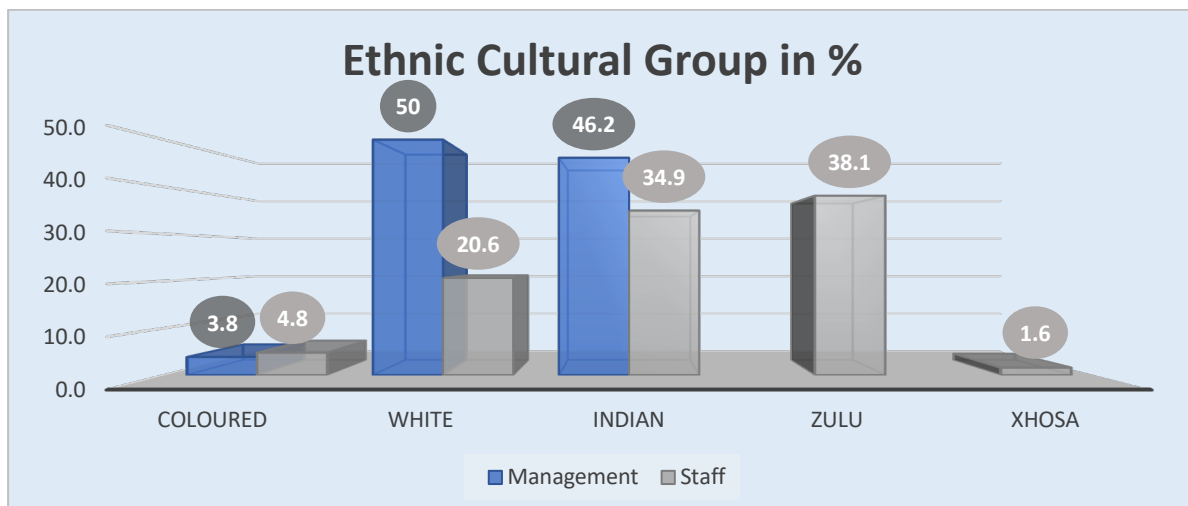


Figure 5.2 - Ethnic Cultural Group

The results presented in Table 5.2 and Figure 5.2 reveals the demographic makeup of the respondents. In the management group, 50% of people identify as White and 46.6% as Indian. When compared to the staff cohort as a whole, where Zulu personnel make up 38.1% of respondents, Indian staff make up 34.9%, and White staff make up 20.6%, these ratios stand out. With a strong majority of management being white and Indian, these findings highlight the underrepresentation of other ethnic groups in organisational leadership, indicating a lack of diversity. The distribution of demographics highlights possible obstacles to inclusion and fair representation in decision-making procedures. It has been demonstrated that addressing these gaps promotes a more inclusive and varied corporate culture, which is linked to increased

productivity and creativity. The literature makes the argument that diversity and the representation of difference at all levels of the hierarchy are the only ways to produce shared meaning, especially when viewed through the lens of Chaos Theory. (Alfoqahaa and Jones, 2017:886-892).

	Management		Staff	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pre-matric	1	3,8	4	6,5
Matric	10	38,5	30	48,4
NQF Level 5-6	5	19,2	14	22,6
Diploma	3	11,5	5	8,1
Certificate	1	3,8	5	8,1
BBA	1	3,8		
Post-Graduate Qualification	5	19,2	4	6,5
Total	26	100	62	100
Missing			1	
Total			63	

Table 5.3 - Highest Level of Education

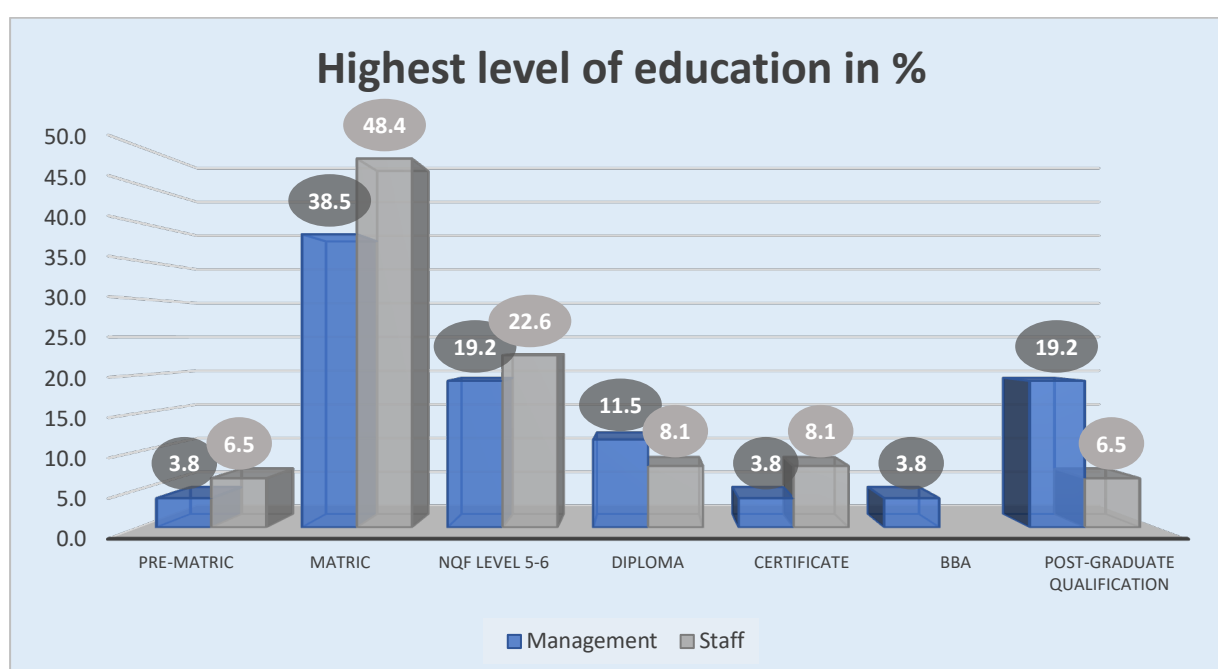


Figure 5.3 – Highest Level of Education

A considerable percentage of respondents who fall into the management category (38.5%) and staff category (48.4%) clearly have a matriculation certificate as shown in Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3. It is significant that having a matriculation certificate is one of the requirements for employment inside the enterprise under inquiry, confirming that the workforce complies with this criterion. Additionally, a sizable portion of both

management (19.2%) and staff (22.6%) has NQF level 5–6 qualifications, demonstrating the workforce's diversity in educational backgrounds. Additionally, a significant portion of the employees has trade qualifications, which is important in this business because of the specialized nature of the automotive industry. Contrarily, a small portion of the personnel (6.5%) have post-graduate degrees, showing that the workforce has a lower prevalence of advanced degrees in non-management positions. Supported by the literature, knowledge of practical applications is crucial in the automotive sector and focus is more on training academies as opposed to formal advanced degrees (Ansara and Davids, 2018:98).

5.3.2 Central tendency Measures

Central tendency measures were conducted to assess how centred the distribution of the constructs involved in the study are. A five-point Likert scale where the value 1 corresponds to "*Strongly disagree*" and the value 5 corresponds to "*Strongly agree*" was applied to measure the following constructs: Flow of Communication, Control (management, structures, processes), Chaos Theory principle and Communication Channel Richness. Since the mean point of the five-point Likert scale is 2.5 (5/2), any mean scores below 2.5 indicate that most respondents tend to either disagree or strongly disagree with the statements measuring the constructs, while mean scores between 2.5 and 3.4 suggest that most respondents are neutral. All the mean scores equal to or above 3.5 indicate that most respondents either agree or strongly agree with the statements measuring that specific construct. The questions related to each category of the construct will include the central tendency measures. Additionally, a thorough demographic interpretation that takes into account gender and race in relation to the relevant construct will be provided. This will ensure a comprehensive analysis of the data, allowing for a nuanced understanding of how demographic factors may influence perceptions within each construct category.

Questions are presented below within their construct categories:

5.3.2.1 *Flow of Communication*

Q. I filter information before communicating it to my staff and exclude information I don't think is important

		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	2	18,2
	Agree	6	54,5
	Strongly Agree	3	27,3
	Total	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	14,3
	Neutral	1	14,3
	Agree	5	71,4
	Total	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	1	33,3
	Agree	2	66,7
	Total	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	2	50
	Strongly Agree	2	50
	Total	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	100

Table 5.4 - Filtering of information by managers before communicating it to staff

The results in Table 5.4 above reveal that most of management from the respective divisions agree that they filter information before communicating it to staff. This included 81.8 % of Pinetown management, 71.4% of Durban management and 66.7% of Truck Centre New Germany management, 100% of Pietermaritzburg management and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management. Specific to this study, this finding raises concerns of management's use of filtering information as a form of control, which in terms of the presented literature in Section 3.2.1 is a hinderance to self-organisation and the organisations ability to adapte to change and equally be diverse. Determining the causes of this filtering behaviour is essential to evaluating its effects on employee engagement and internal communication dynamics.

Q. When I am busy and day-to-day problems arise, I often 'flag' them and deal with them later or another day

		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	4	36,4
	Disagree	3	27,3
	Agree	4	36,4
	Total	11	100

Durban	Strongly Disagree	2	28,6
	Disagree	3	42,9
	Neutral	2	28,6
	Total	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	2	66,7
	Neutral	1	33,3
	Total	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	3	75
	Agree	1	25
	Total	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	100

Table 5.6 – ‘Flagging’ of day-to-day problems by management

Withholdibg Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg (100%) indicating a neutral response. Table 5.6 above reveals that the remaining divisions under study disagreed with the statement that when day-to-day problems arise that they flag them and deal with them on another day. 63.7% of Pinetown management, 71.5% of Durban management, 66.7% of Truck Centre New Germany management and 75% of Pietermaritzburg management respectively disagreed with the above statement. These findings raise concerns of management’s awareness regarding the impact of small changes within a dynamic system as outlined in the literature section on the butterfly effect (2.2.2.3 - i) . From the perspective of managing emergent change and the Chaos Theory, acknowledging and managing small changes is critical to maintain self-organisation.

Q. Communication between the different departments flows freely and accurately					
Division/Branch		Staff		Management	
		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	7	26,9	1	9.1
	Disagree	8	30,8	5	45.5
	Neutral	6	23,1	3	27.3
	Agree	5	19,2	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Neutral	4	23,5	1	14.3
	Agree	9	52,9	4	57.1

	Strongly Agree	2	11,8	2	28.6
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7	0	0
	Neutral	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Agree	3	50	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
	Neutral	0	0	1	25
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	7	63,6	3	75
	Strongly Agree	4	36,4	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.7 – Flow of Communication between different departments

Table 5.7 reveals that besides for Pinetown staff (57.7%) and management (54.6%) respondents, most respondents from the divisions under study agree that communication between departments flows freely and accurately. This findings raise questions about possible challenges to interdepartmental communication in the Pinetown staff and managemet groups. With departments in an organisation being interdependent, the free flow of communication is essential to maintain self-organisation. These findings also suggests the likelihood of these groups working in “silos”. As presented in the literature (Section 2,2; 2,3 and 2.4) and conceptual framework (Section 3.2), communication cannot operate in isolation in dynamic, interdependent systems.

h. 5.3.2.1 (a) Cross-tabulated Data Analysis – Flow of Information

The graphs below (Graph 5.5 and 5.6) present cross tabulated data to present the relationship between gender, race and the central tendency measure of the flow of information.

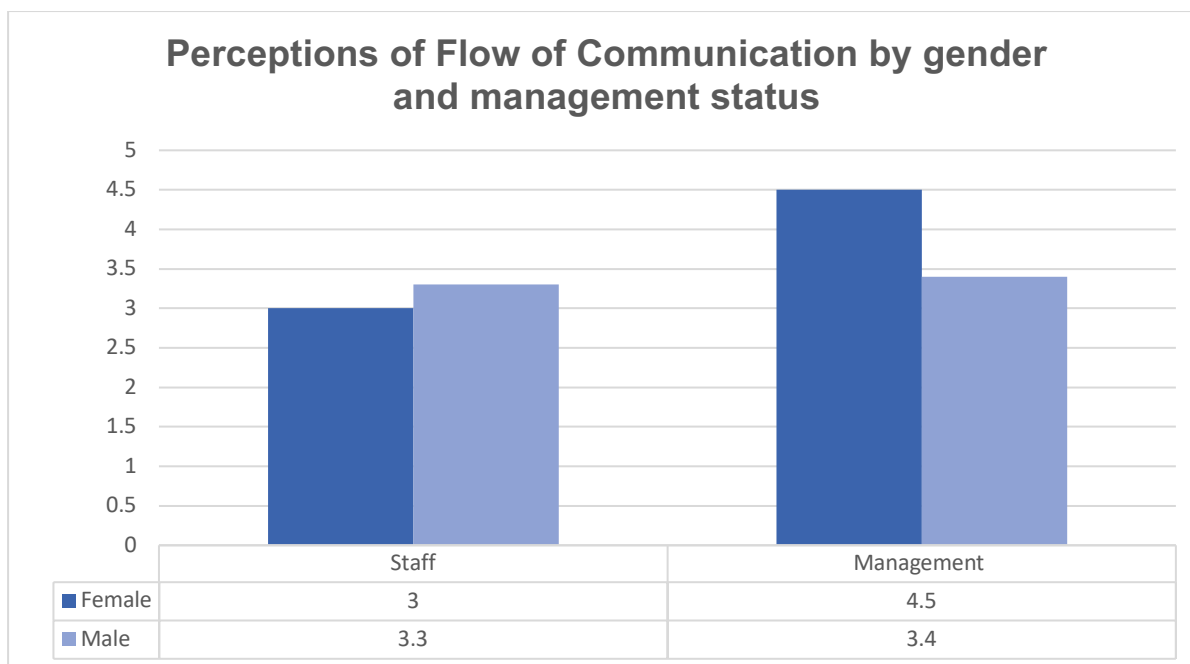


Figure 5.4 – Perceptions of the Flow of Communication according to gender and management status

The cross tabulated data in Figure 5.4 presents the perceptions of the flow of communication according to gender and management status. Withholding female management, a consistent pattern of the perception of the flow of communication is revealed with the mean across the variables being between 3 – 3.4 indicating a neutral assessment. These findings confirm the position of the literature (Section 2.16.5.1) that communication is a basic human need that transcends both race and gender.

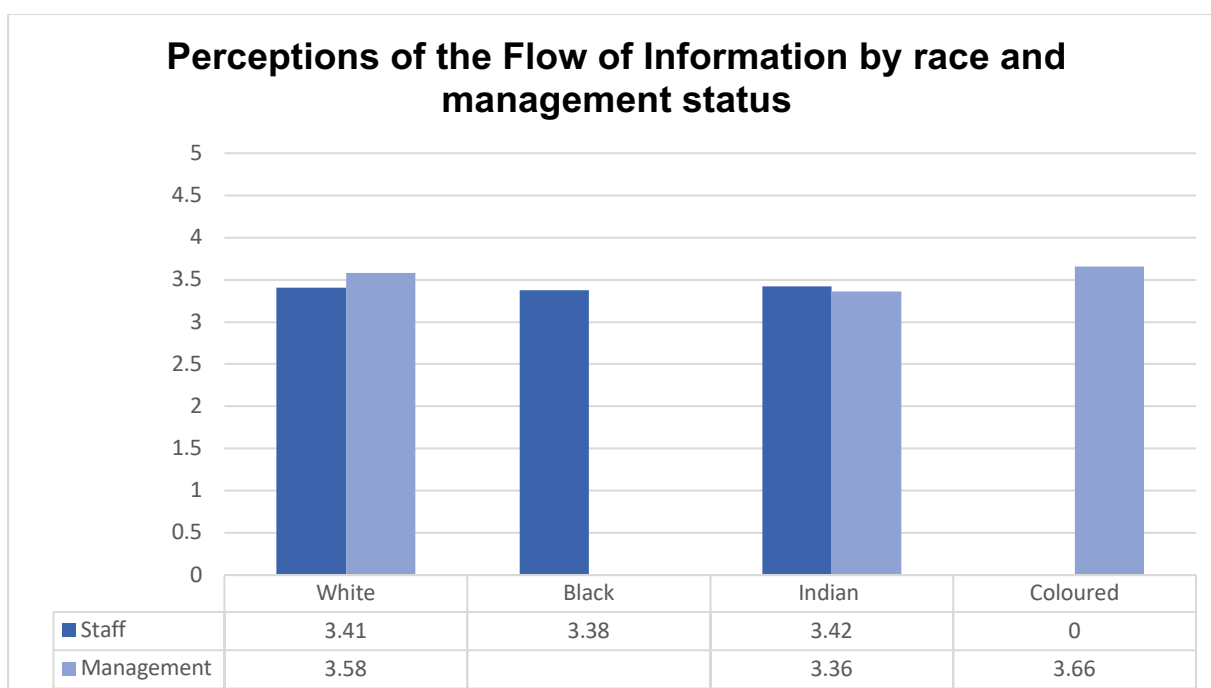


Figure 5.5 - Perceptions of the Flow of Communication according to race and management status

A consistent pattern in the perceptions of communication flow across race and management status are revealed in Figure 5.5. withholding white and coloured management, regardless of race and management status, most respondents gave the information flow a rating of 3.36 to 3.42, leaning towards a neutral assessment. What is important to note is the pattern that sees a slightly higher rating for white (3.58) and coloured (3.66) management indicating agree and strongly agree assessment. Positive perceptions of the effectiveness of internal communication are suggested by the higher ratings for both white and coloured management. Disparities among racial groups, however, can point to different experiences or expectations. It is necessary to take into account the body of research on diversity and communication in organisations in order to comprehend these findings and the possible impact of colonial influences as presented in the literature (Louw and Jackson, 2008:16-17, Nkoma *et al.*, 2015:6).

5.3.2.2 Control (management, structures, processes)

Q. Authority to make decisions is only in the hands of senior managers			
		Staff	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	2	7,7
	Neutral	6	23,1
	Agree	9	34,6
	Strongly Agree	9	34,6
	Total	26	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9
	Neutral	7	41,2
	Agree	7	41,2
	Strongly Agree	2	11,8
	Total	17	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7
	Agree	4	66,7
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7
	Total	6	100

Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	2	18,2
	Neutral	2	18,2
	Agree	6	54,5
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1
	Total	11	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	50
	Agree	1	50
	Total	2	100

Table 5.8 - Authority to make decisions in the hands of senior managers

Table 5.8 above reveals that except for Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg, respondents disagreeing (50%) with the statement that authority to make decisions is only in the hands of the senior managers, that the majority of respondents from divisions under study, namely staff from Pinetown (69.2%), Durban (53%), Truck Centre New Germany (83.4%) and Pietermaritzburg (63.6%), all agreed that the authority to make decisions was only in the hands of the senior managers. This disparity calls for a closer inspection of the organisation's decision-making procedures and policies surrounding autonomy. These findings raise concerns on the implications of decision making that has limited insights due to a “top-down process” as presented in Section 2.3.3 and 2.3.5.1 of the literature.

Q. Authority to make decisions is only in the hands of senior managers and my line manager			
		Staff	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	2	7,7
	Neutral	8	30,8
	Agree	12	46,2
	Strongly Agree	4	15,4
	Total	26	100
Durban	Neutral	8	47,1
	Agree	9	52,9
	Total	17	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7
	Agree	5	83,3
	Total	6	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	9,1

	Neutral	4	36,4
	Agree	5	45,5
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1
	Total	11	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	50
	Agree	1	50
	Total	2	100

Table 5.9 – Authority to make decisions in the hands of senior managers and line managers

According to the results in Table 5.9 above revealed that most respondents within the divisions under study; namely, respondents from Pinetown (61.6%), Durban (52.9%), Truck Centre New Germany (83.3%) and Pietermaritzburg (54.6%), all agreed that the authority to make decisions was only in the hands of the senior managers. However, respondents from Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg disagreed (50%) with the statement that the authority to make decisions is only in the hands of the senior managers. Similar to the interpretation in Table 5.8 above, the findings in Table 5.9 present concerns in the ability of an organisation to have an inclusive and diverse decision making process due to limited insights within a top-down process.

Q. We are encouraged to take initiative and to make appropriate decisions and do not have to refer everything up the reporting line					
Division/Branch		Staff		Management	
		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	4	15,4	3	27.3
	Disagree	7	26,9	1	9.1
	Neutral	6	23,1	1	9.1
	Agree	8	30,8	4	36.4
	Strongly Agree	1	3,8	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	3	17,6	1	14.3
	Disagree	5	29,4	0	0
	Neutral	4	23,5	1	14.3
	Agree	5	29,4	5	71.4
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Disagree	3	50	1	33.3

Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	16,7	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
	Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Neutral	3	27,3	0	0
	Agree	3	27,3	3	75
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Agree	4	36,4	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
	Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Agree	0	0	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.10 – Decision making and encouragement of initiative

The results in the table above (Table 5.10) reveal that the majority of staff (63.7%) and management (100%) from Pietermaritzburg and management from Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg (100%) agree that they are encouraged to take individual initiative and do not have to refer everything up the reporting line. Whereas most staff (66.7%) and management (66.6%) from Truck Centre New Germany and Durban management (71.4%) disagree with the above statement. These disparities highlight the necessity to investigate and resolve variations in organisational culture and leadership styles throughout divisions in order to create a self-organising system. With emergent changes occurring at the local level, Peppers (2014:para. 2-3) suggests staff input is critical in managing emergent change.

Q. My line manager holds back or filters information to me					
Division/Branch		Staff		Management	
		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	9	34,6	1	9.1
	Disagree	0	0	5	45.5
	Neutral	2	7,7	1	9.1
	Agree	12	46,2	2	18.2
	Strongly Agree	3	11,5	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	4	25	4	57.1

	Disagree	0	0	1	14.3
	Neutral	3	18,75	1	14.3
	Agree	9	56,25	1	14.3
	Total	16	100	7	100
	Missing	1			
		17			
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	3	50	1	33.3
	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	3	50	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	5	45,5	2	50
	Disagree	0	45,5	0	0
	Neutral	0	0	1	25
	Agree	5	45,5	1	25
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.11 – Filtering and holding back of information by line manager

Table 5.11 above reveals that most staff respondents under study agreed with the statement that their line manager filters or holds back information from them. In contrast there was less agreement with management that their line manager was holding back or filtering information to them. A closer look at communication dynamics and attempts to foster trust between management and employees is necessary in light of this dissonance, which draws attention to potential differences in communication practices and perceptions between various hierarchical levels within the organisation.

Q. As employees we have the freedom and independence to do our jobs effectively					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	1	9.1
	Disagree	4	15,4	2	18.2
	Neutral	5	19,2	3	27.3
	Agree	15	57,7	3	27.3

	Strongly Agree	1	3,8	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	2	11,8	0	0
	Neutral	1	5,9	1	14.3
	Agree	11	64,7	4	57.3
	Strongly Agree	3	17,6	2	28.6
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Neutral	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	9	81,8	2	50
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	2	50
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	50	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.12 – Freedom and Independence to do the job effectively

The results from Table 5.12 above reveal that most respondents under study agree that as employees they have the freedom to do their jobs effectively. However, in comparing the divisions, the results reveal a significant difference with the agreeableness of this statement. With most staff respondents from Durban (82.3%) and management respondents (85.9%), as well as Pietermaritzburg staff respondents (100%), management respondents (100%) and respondents from Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management (100%), while respondents from Pinetown staff (61.5%) and management respondents (45.5%), and respondents from Truck Centre New Germany staff and management (66.6%) have a lower percentage of agreeableness with the above statement. These discrepancies highlight the need of investigating variables impacting workers' opinions of their level of autonomy and productivity in various departments. From the perspective of the literature and conceptual framework, autonomy is required to self-organise and therefore increase communication efficiency operational effectiveness (Heylighen, 2011:157, Wheatley, 1994:95).

Q. Our company has too many rules, regulations, and standard procedures

		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	1	3,8	2	18.2
	Neutral	8	30,8	1	9.1
	Agree	11	42,3	5	45.5
	Strongly Agree	6	23,1	3	27.3
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	2	11,8	2	28.6
	Neutral	5	29,4	2	28.6
	Agree	6	35,3	2	28.6
	Strongly Agree	4	23,5	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	2	33,3	2	66.7
	Neutral	3	50	0	0
	Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	2	18,2	0	0
	Disagree	4	36,4	3	75
	Neutral	1	9,1	0	0
	Strongly Agree	4	36,4	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	0	0	1	100
	Neutral	1	50	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.13 – Company rules, regulations and standard procedures

The above table (Table 5.13) reveals that Pinetown staff respondents (64.4%) and management respondents (72.8%), Durban staff (58.8%) and management respondents (42.9%), and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff (50%) and management respondents (100%) agree that the company has too many rules, regulations and standard procedures. Whereas, a strong majority of Truck Centre

New Germany staff (88.3%) and management (66.7%) respondents as well as Pietermaritzburg staff (54.6%) and management (66.7%) respondents disagree with the above statement. From the perspective of the literature (Section 2.17), this finding prompts considerations regarding potential impact of control measures in the ability of a dynamic organisation to adapt to emergent change and self-organise.

Q. All employees are actively encouraged to participate in contributing to organisational policy matters					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	9	34,6	2	18.2
	Disagree	11	42,3	5	45.5
	Neutral	1	3,8	1	9.1
	Agree	5	19,2	3	27.3
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9	2	28.6
	Disagree	13	76,5	2	14.3
	Neutral	2	11,8	0	0
	Agree	1	5,9	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	3	50	1	50
	Disagree	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	2	33,3	1	50
	Total	6	100	2	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	3	27,3	0	0
	Disagree	4	36,4	4	100
	Neutral	1	9,1	0	0
	Agree	3	27,3	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	0	0	1	100
	Disagree	2	100	0	0

Table 5.14 – Encouragement of employees in contributing to organisational policy matters

The above table (Table 5.14) reveals that most staff and management respondents disagree with the statement that all employees are involved actively in participating and contributing to organisational policy matters. This included 76.9% of Pinetown staff and 63.7% of management respondents, 82.4% of Durban staff respondents, 63.7% of Truck Centre New Germany staff and 50% of management respondents, 63.7% of staff respondents from Pietermaritzburg and 50% of management respondents and 100% of Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff respondents, who all disagreed respectively with the above statement. In contrast, 57.2% of Durban management respondents and 100% of Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management respondents agreed that all staff were involved in organisational policy matters. These results point to differences in opinions on staff participation in policy-making amongst divisions, which may have an impact on decision-making procedures, employee empowerment and organisational transparency. The literature (Section 2.17) suggests that policies that are driven from the top-down are limited in their ability to have shared meaning and thus buy-in from staff.

Q. Not following the prescribed chain of command to get a job done is frowned upon					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	2	7,7	2	18.2
	Neutral	2	7,7	1	9.1
	Agree	12	46,2	7	63.6
	Strongly Agree	10	38,5	1	9.1
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Neutral	5	29,4	3	42.9
	Agree	9	52,9	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	2	11,8	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	1	16,7	0	0
	Neutral	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	2	33,3	3	100
	Strongly Agree	2	33,3	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	9,1	1	25
	Neutral	4	36,4	1	25

	Agree	4	36,4	2	50
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.15 – Following of the prescribed chain of command

According to the results in Table 5.15 most of staff and management respondents in all the divisions under study agreed with the statement that not following the prescribed chain of command to get the job done is ‘frowned upon’. With Pinetown staff (84.7%) and management (72.7%) respondents, Truck Centre New Germany management respondents (100%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management respondents (100%) revealing a stronger agreement with the statement when compared to the other divisions. These findings suggest a strong organisational culture emphasising hierarchical structure and adherence to established control measures, which may have implications for decision-making processes, communication dynamics and employee autonomy within the organisation. As described in the literature (Section 2.17), limitations in inclusivity practices, limit diversity and impact the organisational climates that informs self-organisation.

Q. The organisation’s mission and vision are very rigid					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	1	3,8	0	0
	Neutral	9	34,6	2	18.2
	Agree	9	34,6	3	27.3
	Strongly Agree	7	26,9	4	36.4
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	1	6,25	0	0
	Neutral	3	18,8	1	14.3
	Agree	8	50	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	4	25	3	42.9
	Total	16	100	7	100
	Missing	1			
		17			
	Agree	3	50	0	0

Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Agree	3	50	3	100
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	2	18,2	0	0
	Agree	3	27,3	3	75
	Strongly Agree	6	54,5	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Agree	2	100	0	0
	Disagree	0	0	1	100

Table 5.16 - Rigidity of organisations mission and vision

The results in Table 5.16 above reveal that besides for Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management respondents (100%), that most of the respondents under study agreed with the statement that the organisations mission and vision are rigid. With Pinetown staff (64.5%) and management (63.7%) respondents, Durban staff (75%) and management (63.7%) respondents, Truck Centre New Germany staff (75%) and management (100%) respondents, Pietermaritzburg staff (81.8%) and management (75%) respondents and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff (100%) respondents, agreeing with the above statement. This finding prompts considerations regarding the potential challenges to dynamic systems that have rigid mission and visions. According to the literature (Section 3.2.1), mission and visions are usually created by senior management and limited in its ability to manage emergent change driven by local interactions.

i. 5.3.2.2(a) Cross-tabulated Data Analysis - Control (management, structures, processes)

Figure 5.6 and 5.7 below present the cross-tabulation of the variables of gender, management status and race according to the central tendency measure of control.

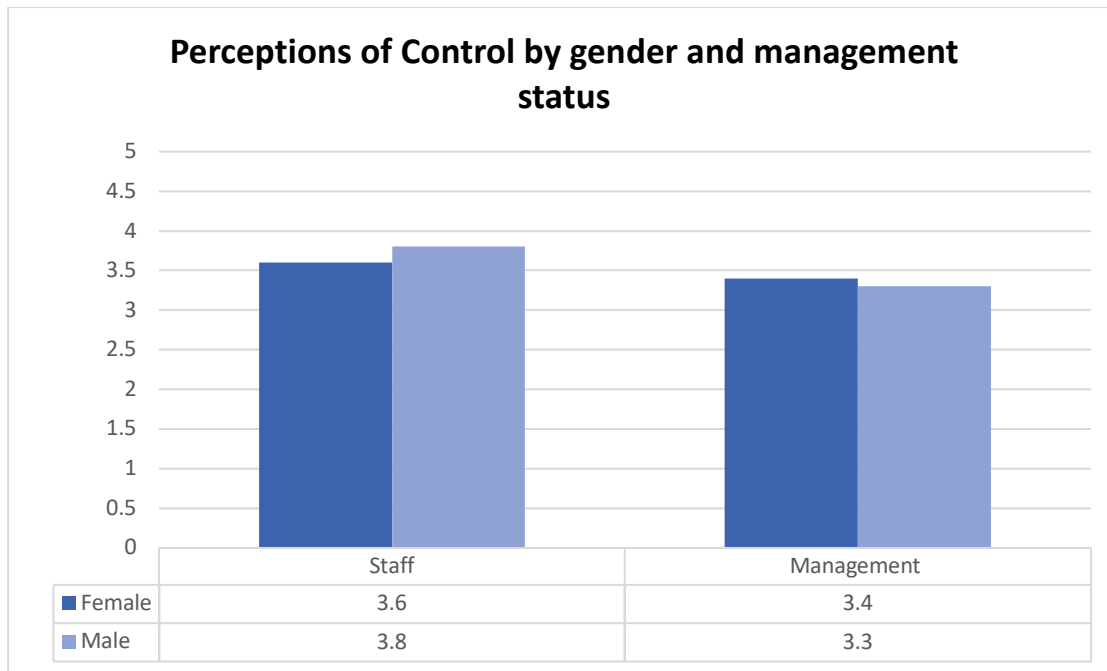


Figure 5.6 – Perceptions of the control (management, structure and processes) by gender and management status

There is a consistent pattern among staff members towards agreement or strong agreement with ratings between 3.6 and 3.8. This implies that employees generally agree about how much control they feel they have within the organisational setting. On the other hand, the management viewpoint provides a contrast as seen by an inclination towards neutral ratings. In comparison to staff, management's mean scores are generally between 3.3 and 3.4, indicating a more neutral perspective. The divergence in perspectives between the management and employees could indicate variations in roles, backgrounds or duties within the organisation indicating possible avenues for additional research to better comprehend organisational dynamics. The literature (Section 3.21) offers insights into this finding and suggests that generally management are responsible for both developing and implementing these control measures and therefore perceive more autonomy.

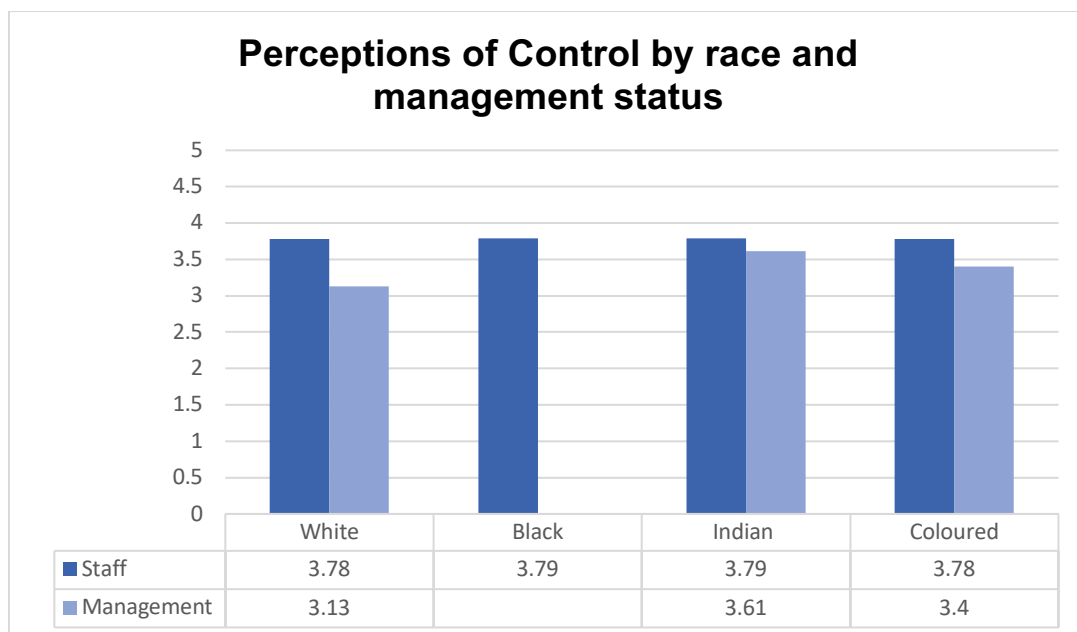


Figure 5.7 – Perceptions of control by race and management status

Data reveals that there is a general belief of high control in the company. Withholding white and coloured management with a neutral rating of 3.13 and 3.4 respectively, there is consensus regardless of race and management status that there are too many rules and control systems. They consistently scored between 3.61 and 3.79 indicating agreement and strong agreement. Different perspectives among racial groups could indicate systematic injustices and prejudices in the processes that lead to decisions, which could affect retention rates and employee morale.

5.3.2.3 *Revenue Collection Chaos Theory Principle*

Q. Communicating between departments is encouraged					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	2	7,7	0	0
	Disagree	3	11,5	0	0
	Neutral	4	15,4	1	9.1
	Agree	12	46,2	3	27.3
	Strongly Agree	5	19,2	7	63.6
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	1	5,9	0	0

	Neutral	3	17,6	0	0
	Agree	10	58,8	4	57.1
	Strongly Agree	3	17,6	3	42.9
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Agree	3	50	2	66.7
	Strongly Agree	3	50	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Agree	5	45,5	1	25
	Strongly Agree	5	45,5	3	75
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	2	100	1	100

Table 5.17 – Encouragement of communication between departments

The results from the above table (Table 5.17) reveal that most respondents under study agree that communication between departments is encouraged. However, in comparing respondents according to division, Pinetown staff respondents agreed significantly less than the rest of the divisions on the above statement, with 64.4% of the staff respondents agreeing to the statement. This was compared to Pinetown management respondents (90.9%), Durban staff (76.4%) and management respondents (100%), Truck Centre New Germany staff and management respondents (100%), Pietermaritzburg staff (91%) and management respondents (100%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management respondents (100%), agreeing that communicating between departments is encouraged. These differences point to possible difficulties or obstructions to efficient communication within the Pinetown division, emphasising the necessity of focused interventions to enhance communication procedures and promote departmental cooperation. Throughout the literature, the importance of the free-flow of communication is essential for managing emergent change.

Q. My line manager hardly ever communicates the organisation's values and mission to me					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	4	15,4	2	18.2

	Disagree	8	30,8	4	36.4
	Neutral	1	3,8	4	36.4
	Agree	10	38,5	1	9.1
	Strongly Agree	3	11,5	0	0
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	6	35,3	3	42.9
	Disagree	7	41,2	3	42.9
	Neutral	3	17,6	0	0
	Agree	1	5,9	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	5	83,3	2	66.7
	Disagree	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	3	27,3	4	100
	Disagree	7	63,6	0	0
	Agree	1	9,1	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Disagree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.18 – Communication of the organisations mission and vision by line manager

The results presented in Table 5.18 above indicate that most respondents under study disagreed with the statement that their line manager hardly ever communicates the organisations values and mission to them. However, when comparing respondents from the divisions under study, Pinetown staff (50%) and management respondents (54.6%) disagreed. This was in comparison to Durban staff (75.6%) and management respondents (85.8%), Truck Centre New Germany staff (100%) and management respondents (66.7%), Pietermaritzburg (90.9%) and management respondents (100%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management respondents (100%). These results highlight the significance of leadership alignment and effective communication in promoting organisational cohesiveness and employee engagement, as emphasized in the literature.

Q. Employees are encouraged to reveal any differences of opinion which they may have with their bosses

		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	4	15,4	1	9.1
	Disagree	4	15,4	4	36.4
	Neutral	4	15,4	2	18.2
	Agree	7	26,9	3	27.3
	Strongly Agree	7	26,9	1	9.1
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	3	17,6	0	0
	Neutral	4	23,5	1	14.3
	Agree	7	41,2	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	3	17,6	3	42.9
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Neutral	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	1	16,7	0	0
	Strongly Agree	3	50	2	66.7
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Neutral	1	9,1	1	25
	Agree	6	54,5	0	0
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	3	75
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.19 – Revealing of differences of opinions

The table above (Table 5.19) reveals that most respondents agree with the statement that employees are encouraged to reveal any differences of opinion that they have with their bosses except for Pinetown management respondents where 45.5% disagreed with the above statement. Significant results from Table 6.24 revealed that the Pietermaritzburg cluster; namely, Pietermaritzburg staff (75.7%) and management

respondents (75%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff (100%) and management respondents (100%), revealed significantly higher agreeableness with the statement. This also included a higher agreeableness for Durban management respondents with 85.8%. In contrast, the Pinetown cluster (53.8% Pinetown staff respondents and 66.7% Truck Centre New Germany staff and management respondents) had a lower number of respondents agreeing with the statement. This variation underlines how important it is to support an open communication culture in organisations. This finding reveals possible challenges with divisions with lesser agreement which could lead to poorer employee motivation, diminished trust and communication failures. Supported by the literature, encouraging staff members to discuss opposing ideas with their managers increases openness, stimulates creativity and improves problem-solving skills (Redding, 1972, Hayase, 2009:10-11).

Q. There is a long, formal process to follow if we want to share a new ideas or process that might improve the organisation's success					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly disagree	0	0	1	9.1
	Disagree	5	19,2	1	9.1
	Neutral	8	30,8	3	27.3
	Agree	5	19,2	1	9.1
	Strongly Agree	8	30,8	5	45.5
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	14.3
	Disagree	6	35,3	1	14.3
	Neutral	3	17,6	2	28.6
	Agree	8	47,1	2	28.6
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Neutral	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100

Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	2	18,2	1	25
	Disagree	2	18,2	2	50
	Agree	5	45,5	1	25
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Disagree	0	0	1	100
	Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.20 – The process to share new ideas or processes that might improve the organisations success

The results from the table above (Table 5.20) reveal a low level of agreeableness with the statement that there is a long, formal process to follow if employees want to share new ideas or processes. With Pinetown staff (50%) and management respondents (54.6%), Durban management respondents (42.9%), Truck Centre New Germany staff respondents (50%), Pietermaritzburg staff respondents (63.7%) indicating that they agree, while 52.9% of Durban staff respondents, 33.3% Truck Centre management respondents, 75% Pietermaritzburg Management respondents and 50% of Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff respondents and 100% of management respondents disagreed with the above statement.

This divergence in perception has implications for creating organisational procedures that are flexible and agile, especially when it comes to innovation and idea sharing. A lengthy and formal procedure for sharing new ideas might impact innovation, delay decision-making and discourage employee initiative. According to the literature (Section 3.2.1), all qualities that have an impact on self-organisation and adaptability to emergent change (Maani and Cavana, 2007:35).

Q. Differences of opinion with line managers is dealt with by ignoring them. There is no open dialogue or open communication

	Staff		Management	
Division/Branch	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>

Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	2	7,7	2	18.2
	Disagree	12	46,2	4	36.4
	Neutral	3	11,5	4	36.4
	Agree	5	19,2	1	9.1
	Strongly Agree	4	15,4	0	0
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	7	41,2	3	42.9
	Disagree	7	41,2	3	42.9
	Neutral	3	17,6	0	0
	Agree	0	0	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	3	50	2	66.7
	Disagree	3	50	0	0
	Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	5	45,5	4	100
	Disagree	2	18,2	0	0
	Neutral	1	9,1	0	0
	Agree	2	18,2	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	2	100	0	0
	Disagree	0	0	1	100

Table – 5.21 – How differences of opinions are dealt with

The results presented in Table 5.21 demonstrate a general disagreement with the perception that managing differences of opinion with superiors involves no open dialogue or communication. Interestingly, employees in Durban (82.4%) and management respondents (85.8%), together with employees in Truck Centre New Germany (100%) and management respondents in Pietermaritzburg (100%), and employees in Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg (100%) all strongly disagreed with this statement. In contrast, there was noticeably less agreement among Truck Centre New Germany management (66.7%), Pietermaritzburg staff respondents (63.7%), Pinetown personnel (53.9%) and management respondents (54.6%). These findings indicate implications with regards to the dynamics of communication inside

organisations and employee engagement. As emphasized by the literature (Section 2.4 and 2.3), open communication, which includes conflict and problem solving is not only critical for managing emergent change but is essentially required for creating a positive communication climate (Redding, 1972, Hayase, 2009:14).

Q. My line manager provides clear communication to me that I understand					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	1	3,8	0	0
	Neutral	3	11,5	2	18.2
	Agree	11	42,3	7	63.6
	Strongly Agree	11	42,3	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Neutral	2	11,8	0	0
	Agree	7	41,2	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	8	47,1	4	57.1
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	2	33,3	0	0
	Strongly Agree	4	66,7	2	66.7
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	0	0	1	25
	Agree	4	36,4	1	25
	Strongly Agree	7	63,6	2	50
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.22 – Communication from line manager that is understood

The results revealed in Table 5.22 above indicate that most respondents under study agreed with the statement that their line manager provides clear communication that they understand. Except for Truck Centre New Germany management (66.7%) having a significant lower percentage of agreement, the rest of the division under study, such as Durban management, Truck Centre New Germany staff, Pietermaritzburg staff and

Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management agreed 100% with the above statement. The effectiveness of organisational communication and managerial techniques are significantly impacted by these findings. Clear communication routes can help divisions with unanimity of opinion become more productive, promote understanding among members and increase employee satisfaction. Ultimately, the literature (Section 2.15.3.2) suggests the importance of communication efficiency.

Q. My line manager provides me with enough information to make an informed decision					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	0	0
	Disagree	2	7,7	0	0
	Neutral	2	7,7	2	18.2
	Agree	12	46,2	6	54.5
	Strongly Agree	9	34,6	3	27.3
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Neutral	2	11,8	0	0
	Agree	7	41,2	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	7	41,2	4	57.1
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany					
	Agree	3	50	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	3	50	2	66.7
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	0	0	1	25
	Agree	3	27,3	1	25
	Strongly Agree	8	72,7	2	50
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.23 - Quantity of information shared by line manager

Data from the above table (Table 5.23) presents that most respondents under study had significant agreement with the statement that their line manager provides them with enough information for them to make an informed decision. Except for Truck Centre New Germany management respondents, with 66.7% of these respondents agreeing with the above statement, most of the respondents had agreement percentages of between 75%-100%. The implications of these findings, especially for Truck Centre New Germany, is the impact of filtering or reducing information in dynamic organisations. The literature and specifically the Chaos Theory presented in the conceptual framework (Section 3.2.1) suggests that information is needed to keep an organisation at the edge of chaos where its at its most adaptable (Griffin, 2022:para. 4).

Q. When there is a problem or challenge in my department, my line manager does not send any feedback or have any meetings until he/she have found a solution					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	3	27.3
	Disagree	9	34,6	4	36.4
	Neutral	6	23,1	0	0
	Agree	2	7,7	2	18.2
	Strongly Agree	8	30,8	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	13	76,5	5	71.4
	Disagree	2	11,8	1	14.3
	Neutral	1	5,9	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	5,9	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	3	50	2	100
	Disagree	3	50	0	0
	Total	6	100	2	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	4	36,4	4	100
	Disagree	4	36,4	0	0
	Neutral	3	27,3	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100

Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	2	100	1	100

Table 5.24 – Feedback from management during a problem or challenge

The table above (Table 5.24) reveals that most respondents under study disagreed with the statement that when there is a problem or challenge in their department their line manager does not send any feedback or have a meeting until that line manager has found a solution. However, in comparison to the other divisions under study, Pinetown staff (38.4%) and management respondents (63.7%) disagreed significantly less than when compared to the other divisions under study; namely, Durban staff (88.3%) and management (85.7%) respondents, Trucks Centre New Germany staff and management respondents (100%), Pietermaritzburg staff (72.8%) and management respondents (100%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management respondents (100%) who disagreed with the above statement respectively. The implications of these findings is that they reveal the impact not involving staff in decision making has on organisational dynamics and operational efficiency. Theodoridis (2009:101-104) stresses the importance of information during change, including managers receiving information from diverse viewpoints.

Q. When there is a problem or challenge in my department, my line manager gathers as much information as possible to solve the problem before finding out what caused the problem					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	2	18.2
	Disagree	1	3,8	2	18.2
	Neutral	9	34,6	2	18.2
	Agree	9	34,6	2	18.2
	Strongly Agree	6	23,1	3	27.3
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	2	11,8	0	0
	Neutral	3	17,6	2	28.6
	Agree	12	70,6	5	71.4
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Neutral	5	83,3	1	33.3
	Agree	1	16,7	0	0

	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	4	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	5	45,5	1	25
	Neutral	4	36,4	1	75
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	0	0
	Total	11	100	2	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Neutral	0	0	1	100
	Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.25 – Gathering of information by management during a problem or challenge

The results from Table 5.25 above revealed that most respondents under study were either neutral or agreed with the above statement that their line managers gathered as much information as possible to solve a problem before finding out what caused the problem. Pinetown staff (57.7%) and management respondents (45.5%) and Durban staff (70.6%) and management respondents (71.4%), agreed with the statement respectively. While 83.3% of Truck Centre New Germany staff respondents, 75% Pietermaritzburg management respondents and 100% of Truck Centre management respondents were neutral. Pietermaritzburg staff respondents (45.5%) and Pietermaritzburg Truck Centre staff respondents (50%) disagreed with the above statement. These findings underscore the importance of efficient problem-solving approaches in dynamic organisations. Agreeable divisions might gain from a comprehensive and analytical approach to problem-solving, which can result in better outcomes and more informed decision-making. On the other hand, divisions exhibiting greater degrees of disagreement might require attention to improving managerial efficacy and communication in order to guarantee congruence between organisational goals and approaches to problem-solving (Peppers, 2014:para. 2).

Q. When there is a problem or challenge in my department, my line manager immediately approaches us where he/she consults with us to collectively come up with a solution

Division/Branch	Staff		Management	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage

Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	7	26,9	0	0
	Disagree	2	7,7	3	27.3
	Neutral	3	11,5	2	18.2
	Agree	11	42,3	5	45.5
	Strongly Agree	3	11,5	1	9.1
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Neutral	1	5,9	4	57.1
	Agree	3	17,6	2	28.6
	Strongly Agree	12	70,6	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Neutral	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	3	50	0	0
	Strongly Agree	3	50	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	25
	Disagree	0	0	1	25
	Neutral	3	27,3	1	25
	Agree	2	18,2	1	25
	Strongly Agree	6	54,5	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	0	0	1	100
	Agree	1	50	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100		100

Table 5.26 – Consultation of staff by management during a problem or challenge

According to the results in Table 5.26 above, most respondents under study agreed with the statement that when there is a problem or challenge in their department that their line manager immediately approaches them to consult on a solution to the problem or challenge collectively. However, in comparison to the other divisions under study, Pinetown staff (53.8%) and management respondents (54.6%) had significantly less agreement, equally with Truck Centre New Germany management respondents (33.3%) and Pietermaritzburg management respondents (50%) disagreeing with the above statement. Furthermore, Durban management respondents (57.1%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg respondents (100%) indicate a neutral response to the statement above. These findings underscore the importance of employee involvement in problem-solving and thus creating buy in and shared meaning. The literature in

Section 2.2.2. (a.i) suggests that emergent change occurs mostly at the local level, therefore, having staff input not only add value but also prevents decision-making that is isolated to only that of the manager.

Q. We are not encouraged to use individual initiative					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	1	9.1
	Disagree	9	34,6	2	18.2
	Neutral	4	15,4	2	18.2
	Agree	9	34,6	4	36.4
	Strongly Agree	3	11,5	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	2	11,8	2	28.6
	Disagree	8	47,1	1	14.3
	Neutral	1	5,9	1	14.3
	Agree	6	35,3	2	28.6
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	3	50	2	66.7
	Disagree	1	16,7	0	0
	Neutral	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Agree	1	16,7	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	8	72,7	3	100
	Disagree	2	18,2	0	0
	Agree	1	9,1	0	0
	Total	11	100	3	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Disagree	0	0	1	100
	Neutral	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.27 – Encouragement of individual initiative

The results from the above table (Table 5.27) reveal that apart from Pinetown staff (53.8%) and management respondents (54.6%) who disagreed with the statement that staff are not encouraged to use individual initiative, most of the respondents under study disagreed with the above statement. More specifically, Durban staff (58.9%) and management respondents (42.9%), Truck Centre New Germany staff and management respondents (66.7%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff respondents (50%) disagreed with the above statement. In contrast, Pietermaritzburg staff (90.9%) and management (100%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management (100%) had significantly higher percentages of disagreement in comparison. These findings hold significant implications and challenges for divisions that do not encourage individual initiative and have an impact on the organisations ability to manage emergent change. Peppers (2014:para. 2) states that the encouragement of individual initiative facilitates autonomy, engagement and empowerment, all processes that ensure self-organisation.

Q. We are encouraged as employees to be creative and innovative					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	1	9.1
	Disagree	4	15,4	1	9.1
	Neutral	4	15,4	2	18.2
	Agree	10	38,5	6	54.5
	Strongly Agree	7	26,9	1	9.1
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Agree	10	58,8	4	57.1
	Strongly Agree	6	35,3	3	42.9
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	3	50	2	66.7
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	0	0	1	25

	Agree	7	63,6	1	25
	Strongly Agree	4	36,4	2	50
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.28 – Encouragement of Creativity and Innovation

Table 5.28 above reveals that half of the respondents under study agree with the above statement. Pinetown staff (64.4%) and management respondents (63.6%), Pietermaritzburg staff respondents (100%), Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management respondents (100%) agree that as staff they are encouraged to be creative and innovative. Whereas Durban staff (64.7%) and management respondents (57.1%) and Truck Centre New Germany staff (50%) and management respondents (66.7%) disagreed with the above statement. It is noted that the Pietermaritzburg cluster had significantly higher agreement when compared to the other divisions and clusters under study. These findings hold implications on how effectively an organisation can manage emergent change and develop dynamic and innovative solutions to challenges. As presented in the literature (Section 2.2.3), creative input from all levels in an organisation allows for more flexible, dynamic and diverse approaches to challenges.

Q. The culture in our company views failure as an opportunity to learn					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	2	7,7	0	0
	Disagree	3	11,5	2	18.2
	Neutral	7	26,9	2	18.2
	Agree	8	30,8	6	54.5
	Strongly Agree	6	23,1	1	9.1
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	2	11,8	0	0
	Neutral	2	11,8	0	0

	Agree	11	64,7	4	57.1
	Strongly Agree	2	11,8	3	42.9
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	2	33,3	0	0
	Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	2	33,3	2	66.7
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	3	27,3	0	0
	Agree	5	45,5	1	25
	Strongly Agree	3	27,3	3	75
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.29 – Company culture and view of failure as an opportunity to learn

The table above (Table 5.29) reveals that most respondents agreed with the statement that the company culture views failure as an opportunity to learn. In comparing the divisions under study, Pinetown staff (53.9%) and management respondents (63.6%) and Truck Centre New Germany staff respondents (66.6%) revealed lower agreement when compared to Durban staff (76.5%) and management respondents (100%), respondents from Truck Centre New Germany management, Pietermaritzburg management and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management who respectively agreed 100% with the above statement. These findings underscore the importance of a company culture that creates a learning organisation. From the perspective of the conceptual framework (Section 3.2.2 – *iii*), a learning organisation creates context and shared meaning, which creates a proactive, diverse process to dealing with emergent change.

Q. Our company culture emphasises that long term vision is more important than the short-term vision

		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Neutral	3	11,5	1	9.1

	Agree	7	26,9	4	36.4
	Strongly Agree	16	61,5	6	54.5
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Agree	2	11,8	2	28.6
	Strongly Agree	15	88,2	5	71.4
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	5	83,3	2	66.7
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	9,1	0	0
	Strongly Agree	10	90,9	4	100
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Agree	2	100	1	100

Table 5.30 – Emphasis of long- and short-term vision

The results presented in the above table (Table 5.30) reveal that most respondents under study agreed with the statement that the company culture emphasises long term vision as more important than short-term vision. Except for Pinetown staff (88.4%) and Pinetown management respondents (90.9%), the remaining respondents from the divisions under study as per table 5.34 above, agreed 100% with the above statement. This finding holds significant implications for the organisation from the perspective of its adaptability to manage emergent change. According to the literature (Section 2.1 and 3.2.1), long term planning and vision are limited in dynamic systems.

Q. My manager focuses more on results and outcomes then processes and learning from these processes					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	0	0
	Disagree	9	34,6	3	27.3
	Neutral	6	23,1	4	36.4
	Agree	6	23,1	2	18.2
	Strongly Agree	4	15,4	2	18.2

	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	2	11,8	0	0
	Disagree	6	35,3	2	28.6
	Neutral	5	29,4	1	14.3
	Agree	4	23,5	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	2	33,3	0	0
	Disagree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Neutral	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Disagree	1	9,1	1	25
	Neutral	5	45,5	1	25
	Agree	3	27,3	1	25
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	2	100	1	100

Table 5.31 - Focus on results and outcomes versus process and learning from the process

The results from Table 5.31 above revealed varying percentages of agreement with the statement that the respondents line manager focuses more on results and outcomes than learning through processes. 38.4% of Pinetown staff respondents indicated that they disagreed with the statement while 36.4% of Pinetown's management respondents indicated an agreement with the statement. 47.1% of Durban staff respondents disagreed, including 50% of Truck Centre New Germany staff respondents and 33.3% of the divisions management both indicating a disagreement with the statement whereas 45.5% of Pietermaritzburg staff respondents and 100% of Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management respondents indicated that they were neutral to the above statement. These findings highlight the diverse viewpoints among divisions with respect to organisational culture and managerial priorities. Agreement-based divisions may place more emphasis on outputs and outcomes than on process-oriented learning, which could have an effect on organisational flexibility and creativity from the perspective of a learning

organisation. Örtenblad (2001:128) and Binesh (2013:282) a learning organisation is proactive and focusses on processes to ensure capacity development.

Q. In our company outcome and achievement are more important than process and purpose					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	0	0
	Disagree	6	23,1	2	18.2
	Neutral	3	11,5	5	45.5
	Agree	12	46,2	2	18.2
	Strongly Agree	4	15,4	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	4	23,5	1	14.3
	Neutral	5	29,4	2	28.6
	Agree	6	35,3	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	2	11,8	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Neutral	2	33,3	0	0
	Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	2	18,2	0	0
	Neutral	4	36,4	1	25
	Agree	3	27,3	2	50
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.32 – Company views of outcome and achievement versus process and purpose

The table above (Table 5.32) revealed that most of the respondents under study agreed with the statement that in the company, outcome and achievement are more

important than process and purpose. Pinetown staff respondents (61.6%), Durban management respondents (57.2%), Durban staff and management respondents (66.6%), Pietermaritzburg management respondents (75%) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management respondents, respectively agreed with the above statement. Similar to the interpretation offered in Table 5.31 above, these findings hold implications from the perspective of creating a learning organisation for dynamic and diverse workplaces.

Q. Our line manager considers outcome and achievement as more important than process and purpose					
Division/Branch		Staff		Management	
		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	0	0	2	18.2
	Disagree	8	30,8	1	9.1
	Neutral	4	15,4	4	36.4
	Agree	8	30,8	2	18.2
	Strongly Agree	6	23,1	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	3	17,6	0	0
	Disagree	5	29,4	2	28.6
	Neutral	5	29,4	1	14.3
	Agree	4	23,5	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	3	50	1	33.3
	Neutral	2	33,3	0	0
	Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	9,1	1	25
	Neutral	6	54,5	1	25
	Agree	3	27,3	1	25
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Neutral	1	50	1	100

	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.33 – Line manager view of outcome and achievement versus process and purpose

The results from the above table (Table 5.33) reveal that almost half of the divisions respondents under study are of the opinion that outcome and achievement are more important to their line manager than processes and purpose. Division respondents such as Pinetown staff (53.9%), Durban management (57.2%), Truck Centre New Germany management (66.6%) and Pietermaritzburg management (50%) agree with the above statement. These findings highlight the implications for an organisation where managers focus on outcome and achievement. Focusing on process and purpose is essential for creating a learning organisation (Örtenblad, 2001:128).

Q. I create open dialogue for my staff to share their views with me and each other			
		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Neutral	1	9,1
	Agree	3	27,3
	Strongly Agree	7	63,6
	Total	11	100
Durban	Agree	4	57,1
	Strongly Agree	3	42,9
	Total	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Agree	2	66,7
	Strongly Agree	1	33,3
	Total	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	25
	Strongly Agree	3	75
	Total	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	100

Table 5.34 – Open dialogue for staff to share their views

The table above (Table 5.34) reveals the responses from management at the various divisions and indicates that most management respondents in the above divisions believe that they create open dialogue for their staff to share their views with them as well as with other staff members. Except for Pinetown management respondents

(90.9%), the other divisional management agreed 100% with this statement. These findings highlight the importance of management that facilitate open dialogue and thus, encourage the free flow of communication. As presented in the literature (Section 2.17), open communication includes feedback and is timeous and subsequently facilitates a positive communication climate.

Q. My line manager creates an environment where I feel comfortable to share my views even, they are different to his/hers					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	4	15,4	2	18.2
	Disagree	3	11,5	1	9.1
	Neutral	2	7,7	3	27.3
	Agree	5	19,2	3	27.3
	Strongly Agree	12	46,2	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Neutral	1	5,9	2	28.6
	Agree	6	35,3	2	28.6
	Strongly Agree	9	52,9	3	42.9
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	6	100	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	0	0	1	25
	Agree	3	27,3	0	0
	Strongly Agree	8	72,7	3	75
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.35 – Line managers creation of a comfortable environment for staff to share their views

The table above (Table 5.35) reveals that most respondents from the various divisions under study agreed with the statement that their line manager did create an environment which made them feel comfortable to share their views even if they were different from their own. Truck Centre New Germany staff, Pietermaritzburg staff and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management all agreed 100% with the above statement. These findings highlight the importance of organisational processes that facilitate an environment that encourages open communication.

Q. My line manager actively asks for my opinion to improve operations					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	2	7,7	1	9.1
	Disagree	6	23,1	3	27.3
	Neutral	0	0	1	9.1
	Agree	9	34,6	4	36.4
	Strongly Agree	9	34,6	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Neutral	4	23,5	2	28.6
	Agree	6	35,3	1	14.3
	Strongly Agree	7	41,2	4	57.1
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	2	33,3	2	66.7
	Strongly Agree	4	66,7	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	5	45,5	2	50
	Strongly Agree	6	54,5	2	50
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.36 – Asking of staff to share their opinion to improve operations

The results revealed in Table 5.36 above indicated that most respondents from the various divisions under study agree that their line manager actively asks for their

opinion to improve operations. However, in comparison to the other divisions whose respondents agreed 100% with the above statement (Truck Centre New Germany staff, Pietermaritzburg staff and management and Pietermaritzburg Truck Centre), Pinetown management (54.6%) had a somewhat significantly lower perceived agreement with the above statement. These findings hold significant implications for divisions that do not ask for staff opinions in improving operations. With emergent change occurring at the local level, staff engagement in operational processes and procedures is essential (Peppers, 2014:para. 2-4).

Q. Learning from on the job experience is more important than learning through formal training					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	2	8	2	18.2
	Neutral	5	20	1	9.1
	Agree	10	40	4	36.4
	Strongly Agree	8	32	4	36.4
	Total	25	100	11	100
	Missing	1			
		26			
Durban	Disagree	2	11,8	0	0
	Neutral	3	17,6	1	14.3
	Agree	7	41,2	2	28.6
	Strongly Agree	5	29,4	4	57.1
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Neutral	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	3	50	2	66.7
	Strongly Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Neutral	1	9,1	2	50
	Agree	4	36,4	1	25
	Strongly Agree	5	45,5	1	25
	Total	11	100	1	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0

	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.37 – Learning through on-the-job experience versus formal training

The table above (Table 5.37) reveals that most of the respondents within the divisions under study agree that learning from on-the-job experience is more important than learning through formal training. The Pietermaritzburg management respondents notwithstanding, where only 50% of the respondents agreed with the statement, the remaining respondents within the divisions under study had agreement percentages of over 72%. This agreement illustrates how important experiential learning is thought to be for developing expertise and practical skills in an organisational setting. High agreement divisions may view practical experience as the main means of developing skills since they understand how well it fosters practical competence and improves job performance.

Q. Information shared by my line manager is believable, open and honest					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	5	19,2	1	9.1
	Neutral	0	0	2	18.2
	Agree	8	30,8	4	36.4
	Strongly Agree	13	50	4	36.4
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Neutral	0	0	1	14.3
	Agree	10	58,8	1	14.3
	Strongly Agree	7	41,2	5	71.4
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Neutral	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	4	66,7	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	9,1	0	0
	Agree	4	36,4	0	0
	Strongly Agree	6	54,5	4	100
	Total	11	100	4	100
	Agree	1	50	1	100

Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.38 – Sharing of believable, open and honest information by line managers

Table 5.38 above reveals that most of the respondents from the divisions under study agree that information shared by their manager is open and honest. In comparison to the results from the respondents, Truck Centre New Germany management revealed a significantly less agreeableness with the above statement, with only 66.6% of their management agreeing with the statement. Furthermore, there appears to be a geographic cluster trend for management in Pinetown where agreeableness to the above statement was lower than other respondents from other management positions in the other divisions under study; namely, Pinetown management where 72.8% of the respondents agreed and Truck Centre New Germany management respondents who agreed 66.6% with the above statement. This was compared to Durban management where 85.7% of the respondents agreed and Pietermaritzburg management and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management where all respondents (100%) agreed with the statement that information shared by their line manager is believable, open and honest. These findings underscore the value of open communication between managers and staff in building cohesive teams and trust. According to the literature (Section 2.17), open and honest information is important in creating a positive communication climate that can better manage emergent change in diverse workforces.

Q. Senior management has little interest in employees' opinions					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	0	0	3	27.3
	Disagree	4	15,4	2	18.2
	Neutral	8	30,8	2	18.2
	Agree	9	34,6	3	27.3
	Strongly Agree	5	19,2	1	9.1

	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	6	35,3	5	71.4
	Neutral	6	35,3	2	28.6
	Agree	2	11,8	0	0
	Strongly Agree	3	17,6	0	0
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7	2	66.7
	Neutral	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	3	50	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	3	27,3	1	25
	Disagree	3	27,3	3	75
	Neutral	2	18,2	0	0
	Agree	2	18,2	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Disagree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.39 – Interest of senior management in employees' opinions

The results from the above table (Table 5.39) suggest that many of the respondents from the divisions under study disagree with the statement that senior management have little interest in employees' opinions. However, 53.8% of Pinetown staff and 66.7% of Truck Centre New Germany believe that senior management have little interest in their opinion. These results emphasise how crucial it is for organisations to promote an inclusive culture and strong levels of employee engagement. Initiatives targeted at improving senior management and staff communication and collaboration may prove advantageous for divisions that experience higher levels of conflict. Organisations may empower employees and create a sense of ownership by addressing concerns about senior leadership's apparent apathy. This will ultimately create a learning organisation as confirmed by the literature (Section 3.2.2).

Q. The overall atmosphere in our organisation is one of open and free exchange of ideas and opinions

		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	5	20	1	9.1
	Disagree	4	16	1	9.1
	Neutral	8	32	6	54.5
	Agree	8	32	1	9.1
	Strongly Agree	0	0	2	18.2
	Total	25	100	11	100
	Missing	1			
		26			
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Disagree	2	11,8	0	0
	Neutral	2	11,8	1	14.3
	Agree	12	70,6	4	57.1
	Strongly Agree	0	0	2	28.6
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	2	33,3	0	0
	Agree	3	50	3	100
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	25
	Disagree	2	18,2	0	0
	Agree	8	72,7	2	50
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	50	0	0
	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.40 – Atmosphere within the organisation

The table above (Table 5.40), reveals that most respondents from the divisions under study agree with the statement that the atmosphere in the company is one of open and free exchange of ideas as well as opinions. However, 36% of the Pinetown staff disagreed with this statement and 32% of the staff indicated they were neutral to the

statement. Furthermore, 54.5% of Pinetown management indicated a neutral response to this statement. The significance of creating a culture of transparent communication and cooperation in organisations is underscored in these results. Initiatives that support inclusion, transparency and active engagement in idea-sharing procedures may be advantageous for divisions that have lower levels of agreement. From the perspective of the literature (Section 3.2), creating a learning organisation creates a continual process of learning and thus increases operational efficiency.

Q. My opinion is actively sought when policies, procedures, and SOP's need to be changed or updated					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	15	57,7	1	9.1
	Disagree	3	11,5	2	18.2
	Neutral	2	7,7	3	27.3
	Agree	3	11,5	3	27.3
	Strongly Agree	3	11,5	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	5	29,4	0	0
	Disagree	5	29,4	0	0
	Neutral	4	23,5	1	14.3
	Agree	3	17,6	4	57.1
	Strongly Agree	0	0	2	28.6
	Total	17	100	7	0
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	4	66,7	0	0
	Disagree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	7	63,6	0	0
	Disagree	3	27,3	0	0
	Agree	1	9,1	2	50
	Strongly Agree	0	0	2	50
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0

	Agree	1	50	0	0
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.41 – Seeking of employee’s opinions for policies, procedures and SOP’s

The table above (Table 5.41) reveals that only half the respondents from the divisions under study agree that they are actively consulted when policies, procedures and SOP’s need to be changed or updated. Furthermore, the data reveals a trend in the respondents according to hierarchy, where staff from the various divisions under study disagree with the statement, whereas respondents in management agreed to some extent with the above statement. These findings hold significant implications to organisational dynamics and possible operational efficiency impacts. With emergent change occurring at local level, staff involvement in decision making is essential to developing policies, procedures and SOP’s adaptive to emergent change as well as being inclusive and diverse. The literature confirms that communication and information flow should not be separated by structure (Widhiastuti 2012:185).

Q. As employees we are governed by many procedures and policies that regulate how we communicate to people at different levels					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8	1	9.1
	Disagree	2	7,7	3	27
	Neutral	6	23,1	3	27.3
	Agree	13	50	3	27.3
	Strongly Agree	4	15,4	1	9.1
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	1	5,9	2	28.6
	Neutral	2	11,8	0	0
	Agree	13	76,5	4	57.1
	Strongly Agree	1	5,9	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	4	66,7	2	66.7
	Strongly Agree	2	33,3	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	9,1	0	0

	Neutral	1	9,1	0	0
	Agree	7	63,6	4	100
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.42 – Procedures and policies that regulate how employees communicate at different levels

The results from the table above (Table 5.42) indicate that a little over half of the respondents from the divisions under study agree that they are governed by many policies and procedures that govern the way they communicate to people at different levels; namely, 65.4% of staff respondents from Pinetown, 82.4% of staff respondents from Durban and 71.4% of management respondents, 100% of Truck Centre New Germany respondents and 50% of staff respondents from Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg and 100% of management respondents agreed with the statement. In contrast, 100% of management from Pietermaritzburg and 81.8% of the staff disagreed with the statement. These findings underscore the importance of the free flow of communication that is not hindered by control processes and procedures. The literature (Section 2.3 and 2.4) reaffirms the importance of the free flow of communication from the top down and bottom up to ensure an organisation has the ability to self-organise and adapt to emergent change. Furthermore, it ensures that communication climate and culture is diverse.

Q. Our department has its own values that are created by the members of this department					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	0	0	1	9.1
	Disagree	1	3,8	0	0
	Neutral	4	15,4	0	0
	Agree	9	34,6	6	54.5
	Strongly Agree	12	46,2	4	36.4
	Total	26	100	11	100

Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Agree	11	64,7	1	28.6
	Strongly Agree	4	23,5	5	71.4
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	6	100	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Neutral	2	18,2	0	0
	Agree	6	54,5	1	25
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	3	75
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.43 – Departmental values

The table above (Table 5.43) reveals that most of the respondents from the divisions under study agree that their department has its own values created by the member of the department. In comparison to the other divisions under study, Truck Centre New Germany management had significantly lower percentages of agreeableness with only 66.6% of the respondents from that division agreeing with the above statement. This finding highlights the importance of each department creating its own communication climate. The literature highlights how a positive communication climate at the departmental level can enhance buy-in, fosters alignment and a sense of ownership (Freimuth, 2006:145).

Q. We have a say in the organisation's work methods. Our opinion is encouraged					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	7	26,9	2	18.2

	Disagree	8	30,8	1	9.1
	Neutral	1	3,8	2	18.2
	Agree	10	38,5	6	54.5
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	4	23,5	0	0
	Neutral	3	17,6	0	0
	Agree	8	47,1	5	71.4
	Strongly Agree	2	11,8	2	28.6
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	1	16,7	0	0
	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Neutral	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	3	50	2	66.7
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	4	36,4	2	50
	Neutral	1	9,1	0	0
	Agree	5	45,5	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	2	50
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	50	0	0
	Agree	0	0	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.44 – Employees’ say in organisation work methods

The above table (Table 5.44) reveals that most of the respondents from the various divisions under study agreed with the statement that within the organisation their opinion is encouraged with respect to work methods. However, 57.7% of staff from the Pinetown division and 54.5 of management disagreed with the statement. Only respondents from Pinetown management and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg management agreed 100% with the statement. The other divisions under study either disagreed or had just over half of the respondents agreeing with the statement. These findings present significant implications on operational efficiency, creating a positive communication climate that is diverse and ultimately, self-organising. According to Gilstrap (2005), Freimuth (2006:145) and Peppers (2014:para. 2-6) because rich

information is generated at the local level, staff input and engagement is essential in work methods.

Q. We are constantly made aware of how we are expected to behave at work					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	2	7,7	0	0
	Neutral	3	11,5	3	27.3
	Agree	14	53,8	4	36.4
	Strongly Agree	7	26,9	4	36.4
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	3	17,6	1	14.3
	Agree	11	64,7	2	28.6
	Strongly Agree	3	17,6	4	57.1
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	2	33,3	2	66.7
	Strongly Agree	4	66,7	0	0
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	9,1	1	25
	Neutral	3	27,3	1	25
	Agree	6	54,5	2	50
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	100	1	100
	Missing	1			
		2			

Table 5.45 – Expectations on how to behave at work

The table above (Table 5.45) reveals that most respondents agree with the statement that they are made aware of how to behave at work. In contrast to the other divisions under study, 66.7% of respondents from Truck Centre New Germany management and 63.6% of Pietermaritzburg staff had fewer respondents agreeing to the above statement. This finding underscores corporate culture and the “way of doing things” in an organisation. However, although corporate culture is essential in guiding an

organisation, the literature (Section 2.17) indicates that it is limited as it is essentially a predetermined set of values and norms that is often exclusively developed by senior management and therefore not ideal for dynamic organisations.

Q. There is a low level of trust and openness with my line manager					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	6	23,1	4	36.4
	Disagree	9	34,6	4	36.4
	Neutral	2	7,7	3	27.3
	Agree	3	11,5	0	0
	Strongly Agree	6	23,1	0	0
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	5	29,4	3	42.9
	Disagree	12	70,6	3	42.9
	Neutral	0	0	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	6	100	1	33.3
	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	0	0	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	5	45,5	2	50
	Disagree	4	36,4	2	50
	Neutral	2	18,2	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Disagree	1	50	1	100
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.46 – Level of trust and openness with the line manager

As presented in Table 5.46 above, most respondents disagreed with the statement that there is a low level of trust with their line manager. However, 57.7% of Pinetown Staff and 66.6% Truck Centre New Germany management revealed significantly fewer respondents disagreeing with the statement. This finding highlights the possible implications of mistrust with a line manager and the impact it has on organisational

communication and communication culture. Redding (1972) and Marlene *et al.* (2019:283) suggest that openness and trust is an essential construct to create a positive and diverse communication climate.

Q. Working across departmental boundaries is strongly encouraged					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	2	7,7	0	0
	Disagree	7	26,9	3	27.3
	Neutral	7	26,9	2	18.2
	Agree	7	26,9	5	45.5
	Strongly Agree	3	11,5	1	9.1
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Disagree	2	11,8	1	14.3
	Neutral	3	17,6	0	0
	Agree	11	64,7	6	85.7
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	6	100	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	33.3
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Disagree	0	0	1	25
	Neutral	4	36,4	0	0
	Agree	4	36,4	2	50
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	2	100	0	0
	Agree	0	0	1	100

Table 5.47 – Encouragement of working across departmental boundaries

Most respondents as presented in Table 5.47 above agreed with the statement that working across departmental boundaries is encouraged. However, certain divisions and categories of respondents under study had significantly fewer respondents

agreeing in comparison to other divisions. More specifically, only 38.4% of staff from Pinetown, 54.6% of their management and 54.6% Pietermaritzburg staff agreed with the statement. These findings underscore the importance of interdepartmental engagement for organisational and communication efficiency. Organisations as open systems are interdependent and therefore changes in one can cause changes in another causing a butterfly effect. Managing these interdependent departments is critical for adaptation to change that is equally people centred (Gharajedaghi, 2011a:65).

Q. We are encouraged to work together with other departments to achieve the organisations goals					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	2	7,7	0	0
	Disagree	5	19,2	1	9.1
	Neutral	6	23,1	3	27.3
	Agree	10	38,5	7	63.6
	Strongly Agree	3	11,5	0	0
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Disagree	2	12,5	1	14.3
	Neutral	3	18,8	4	57.1
	Agree	10	62,5	0	0
	Strongly Agree	1	6,25	2	28.6
	Total	16	100	7	100
	Missing	1			
		17			
Truck Centre New Germany	Neutral	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	5	83,3	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	9,1	0	0
	Neutral	5	45,5	1	25
	Agree	4	36,4	2	50
	Strongly Agree	1	9,1	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
	Agree	2	100	0	0

Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Agree	0	0	1	100

Table 5.48 – Working with other departments to achieve organisational goals

As presented in Table 5.48 above, most of the respondents under study agreed that they are encouraged to work with other departments to achieve the organisations goals. However, 57.1% of Durban management and 45.5% of Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff indicated they were neutral to this statement. Only Truck Centre New Germany staff, Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg staff and management showed 100% agreement with the statement. The implications of these findings is that interdepartmental collaboration encourages the exchange of information that enhances innovation and problem-solving at the macro-level. The literature states that interdependent systems, like organisational departments reveal patterns at local level that offer insights into challenges at the macro level (Tiplady, 2003:4-5).

Q. My line manager goes out of his/her way to make sure different departments operate in a coordinated way					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	3	11,5	2	18.2
	Disagree	3	11,5	3	27.3
	Neutral	4	15,4	0	0
	Agree	8	30,8	4	36.4
	Strongly Agree	8	30,8	2	18.2
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Disagree	2	11,8	0	0
	Neutral	1	5,9	0	0
	Agree	7	41,2	3	42.9
	Strongly Agree	6	35,3	4	57.1
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	0	0	1	33.3
	Agree	2	33,3	1	33.3
	Strongly Agree	4	66,7	1	33.3

	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	9,1	1	25
	Agree	7	63,6	2	50
	Strongly Agree	3	27,3	1	25
	Total	11	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.49 – Coordination of different departments by line managers

Table 5.49 above reveals that most respondents agree that their line manager goes out of his/her way to make sure that the department operates in a coordinated way. Notably, respondents from Pinetown management, in contrast, were less agreeable when compared to the other divisions under study. This finding underscores the importance of managers in facilitating coordination between departments. As change agents that direct departments towards creating shared meaning, managers have a crucial role in ensuring an active process of interdepartmental coordination (Galacgac and Singh, 2015:522-524).

Q. We are encouraged to work with other departments to be more efficient					
		Staff		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	1	4	4	36.4
	Neutral	14	56	2	18.2
	Agree	7	28	2	18.2
	Strongly Agree	3	12	3	27.3
	Total	25	100	11	100
	Missing	1			
		26			
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	6,3	0	0
	Disagree	1	6,3	1	14.3
	Neutral	2	12,5	0	0
	Agree	9	56,3	4	57.1
	Strongly Agree	3	18,8	2	28.6

	Total	16	100	7	100
	Missing	1			
		17			
Truck Centre New Germany	Agree	5	83,3	2	66.7
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	3	27,3	0	0
	Agree	6	54,5	3	75
	Strongly Agree	2	18,2	1	25
	Total	1	100	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	50	0	0
	Agree	0	0	1	100
	Strongly Agree	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100

Table 5.50 – Working with other departments to be more efficient

Most of the respondents as presented in Table 5.50 above agree with the statement that they are encouraged to work with other departments to be more efficient. However, in contrast, 56% of Pinetown staff indicated a neutral response to the above statement as well as only 45.5% of Pinetown management agreeing with the above statement. This discrepancy in the findings lies in the impact of interdepartmental collaboration to achieve organisational efficiency. According to the literature, interdepartmental collaboration enhances problem-solving as well as shared meaning that facilitates self-organisation (Tiplady, 2003:4-5).

Q. My line manager appreciates that diversity in our workforce is an asset in the success of our department			
		<i>Staff</i>	
Division/Branch		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Disagree	1	3,8
	Neutral	4	15,4
	Agree	10	38,5
	Strongly Agree	11	42,3
	Total	26	100
Durban	Neutral	1	5,9
	Agree	11	64,7

	Strongly Agree	5	29,4
	Total	17	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7
	Neutral	1	16,7
	Agree	2	33,3
	Strongly Agree	2	33,3
	Total	6	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	4	36,4
	Strongly Agree	7	63,6
	Total	11	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50
	Strongly Agree	1	50
	Total	2	100

Table 5.51 – Appreciation of diversity in the workforce as an asset to the department

Table 5.51 above reveals that most respondents agree that their manager appreciates the impact and importance of diversity in the workplace. However, in contrast, only 66.6% of staff from Truck Centre New Germany agreed with the statement. This discrepancy in the findings holds significant ramifications on creating an inclusive and diverse workforce. According to Alfoqahaa and Jones (2017:885), diversity offers a competitive advantage by increasing the opportunity for innovation and creativity.

Q. My line manager's own culture affects the way he/she deals with cultures that are different to his/hers			
		<i>Staff</i>	
Division/Branch		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Strongly Disagree	1	3,8
	Disagree	9	34,6
	Neutral	7	26,9
	Agree	5	19,2
	Strongly Agree	4	15,4
	Total	26	100
Durban	Disagree	3	18,8
	Neutral	2	12,5
	Agree	6	37,5
	Strongly Agree	5	31,3
	Total	16	100
	Missing	1	

		17	
Truck Centre New Germany	Neutral	1	16,7
	Agree	4	66,7
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7
	Total	6	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	9,1
	Disagree	1	9,1
	Neutral	1	9,1
	Agree	4	36,4
	Strongly Agree	4	36,4
	Total	11	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50
	Strongly Agree	1	50
	Total	2	100

Table 5.52 - Effect of managers culture when dealing with other different cultures

As presented in the table above (Table 5.52), most respondents agreed that their line managers' own culture affects the way they deal with cultures different to their own. However, 38.4% of staff from Pinetown disagreed with the statement. These findings underscore the importance of cultural competence in order to harness cultural diversity. A skill that is essential for the 21st century workforce (de Guzman *et al.*, 2016:1).

Q. I am aware that my own culture can affect my thinking when dealing with a diverse workforce			
		<i>Management</i>	
Division/Branch		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Agree	7	63,6
	Strongly Agree	4	36,4
	Total	11	100
Durban	Disagree	1	14,3
	Agree	3	42,9
	Strongly Agree	3	42,9
	Total	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Agree	2	66,7
	Strongly Agree	1	33,3
	Total	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	25
	Strongly Agree	3	75

	Total	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	100

Table 5.53 – Awareness of one’s own culture and its affect in dealing with a diverse workforce

Most respondents as presented in the table above (Table 5.53) indicated that they are aware that their own thinking affects the way in which they deal with a diverse workforce. This finding underscores the importance of cultural awareness and its impact on collaborations and engagement in a diverse workforce. The literature and specifically the Chaos Theory (Section 3.2.1), states that the interactive process of information, culture and learning are critical for self-organisation.

Q. I can easily communicate with people who come from different cultures than my own			
		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Agree	4	36,4
	Strongly Agree	7	63,6
	Total	11	100
Durban	Agree	3	42,9
	Strongly Agree	4	57,1
	Total	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Agree	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	25
	Strongly Agree	3	75
	Total	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	100

Table 5.54 – Communication with different cultures

All respondents (100%) across the divisions under study agreed that they can easily communicate with people that have a different culture than their own. This finding underscores the importance of cultural awareness in organisational dynamics and

managing a diverse workforce. Cultural competence as a management skills ensures that managers develop meaningful relationships with staff (de Guzman et al., 2016:1).

Q. My line Manager can easily communicate with people that are from different cultures to his/hers			
		Staff	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	3	11,5
	Neutral	3	11,5
	Agree	8	30,8
	Strongly Agree	12	46,2
	Total	26	100
Durban	Disagree	1	5,9
	Agree	8	47,1
	Strongly Agree	8	47,1
	Total	17	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Neutral	2	33,3
	Agree	3	50
	Strongly Agree	1	16,7
	Total	6	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	2	18,2
	Strongly Agree	9	81,8
	Total	11	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	50
	Strongly Agree	1	50
	Total	2	100

Table 5.55 – Communication with different culture by management

Most respondents as presented in the table above (Table 5.54) indicated that they agreed that their manager can easily communicate with cultures that are different to their own. However, in comparison to the other divisions under study, only 66.7% of Truck Centre New Germany staff indicated their agreement with this statement. The discrepancy in the findings highlights the importance of communication that is culturally representative. The literature (Section 3.2.1) highlights the importance of intercultural communication in collaborative transformation.

Q. I believe that cultural diversity in our workforce is an asset in the success of our department

		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	1	9,1
	Neutral	1	9,1
	Agree	3	27,3
	Strongly Agree	6	54,5
	Total	11	100
Durban	Agree	3	42,9
	Strongly Agree	4	57,1
	Total	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	33,3
	Neutral	1	33,3
	Strongly Agree	1	33,3
	Total	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	25
	Strongly Agree	3	75
	Total	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	100

Table 5.56 – Belief that cultural diversity is an asset to the department

As presented in Table 5.56 above, most of the respondents under study indicated that they agreed with the statement that cultural diversity is an asset to the business. However, 33.3% of Truck Centre New Germany management disagreed with this statement. The discrepancy in this finding holds implications in the impact of cultural diversity as an asset and therefore, the overall ability of an organisation to self-organise. Supported by the literature, diverse workforces are six times more likely to adapt to change (Deloitte, 2020:6).

Q. Cultural diversity adds more value than challenges

		Management	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Neutral	3	27,3
	Agree	4	36,4
	Strongly Agree	4	36,4
	Total	11	100
Durban	Agree	3	42,9
	Strongly Agree	4	57,1

	Total	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Agree	2	66,7
	Strongly Agree	1	33,3
	Total	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Disagree	1	25
	Agree	2	50
	Strongly Agree	1	25
	Total	4	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Agree	1	100

Table 5.57 – Value that cultural diversity adds

Most of the respondents as presented in Table 5.57 indicated that they agree that cultural diversity adds more value than challenges. In comparison, respondents from Pinetown and Pietermaritzburg indicated less agreeableness. This finding underscores the importance of cultural diversity as an asset to an organisation. Supported by the literature, it is no longer the assumption that cultural differences are a barrier to communication (Harris and Moran, 1999:29).

Q. Our company culture negatively impacts and excludes certain employee's personal culture's					
		<i>Staff</i>		<i>Management</i>	
Division/Branch		<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Pinetown	Disagree	7	26,9	4	36.4
	Neutral	10	38,5	3	27.3
	Agree	9	34,6	4	36.4
	Total	26	100	11	100
Durban	Strongly Disagree	1	5,9	0	0
	Disagree	6	35,3	4	57.1
	Neutral	9	52,9	2	28.6
	Agree	1	5,9	1	14.3
	Total	17	100	7	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Strongly Disagree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Disagree	3	50	1	33.3
	Neutral	1	16,7	0	0
	Agree	1	16,7	1	33.3
	Total	6	100	3	100
Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	3	27,3	1	25
	Disagree	4	36,4	2	50

Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	3	27,3	1	25
	Agree	1	9,1	0	0
	Total	11	100	4	100
	Disagree	0	0	1	0
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Strongly Disagree	1	50	0	0
	Neutral	1	50	0	0
	Total	2	100	1	100
	Disagree	0	0	1	0

Table 5.58 – Impact of company culture on employee personal culture

Most respondents as presented in the above table (Table 5.58) indicated that they disagree with the statement that the company's culture negatively impacts and excludes certain employees' personal cultures. It is noted that only Pinetown staff (34.6%) and management respondents (36.4%) agreed with the statement, respectively. The discrepancy in this finding raises concern on the impact of company cultures that marginalize employees cultures. Supported by the literature, Uyan (2020:423) states that organisations cannot have a centralized approach to company culture but need to create inclusive, shared meaning.

Q. My line manager is aware that my experiences and background impact the way we communicate to each other			
		Staff	
Division/Branch		Frequency	Percentage
Pinetown	Disagree	1	3,8
	Neutral	5	19,2
	Agree	16	61,5
	Strongly Agree	4	15,4
	Total	26	100
Durban	Disagree	1	5,9
	Neutral	1	5,9
	Agree	8	47,1
	Strongly Agree	7	41,2
	Total	17	100
Truck Centre New Germany	Disagree	1	16,7
	Agree	5	83,3
	Total	6	100
Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	9,1
	Agree	7	63,6
	Strongly Agree	3	27,3

	Total	11	100
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	Neutral	1	50
	Strongly Agree	1	50
	Total	2	100

Table 5.59 – Impact of employee experience on communication with line manager

Most respondents as presented in Table 5.59 above indicated their agreeableness with the statement that their line manager is aware that their background and culture impact the way they communicate to them. However, in contrast, only 50% of staff respondents from Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg agreed with the statement. This finding highlights the importance of cultural competence and its impact on communication within an organisation. The literature supports this and Harris and Moran (1999:29) suggest that there needs to be an understanding between parties within this dynamic exchange.

j. 5.3.2.3(a) Cross Tabulation Data Analysis - Revenue Collection Chaos Theory Principle

The following graphs (Figure 5.8 and 5.9) present the cross-tabulation data according to the variables of race, gender, management status and the Chaos Theory principles.

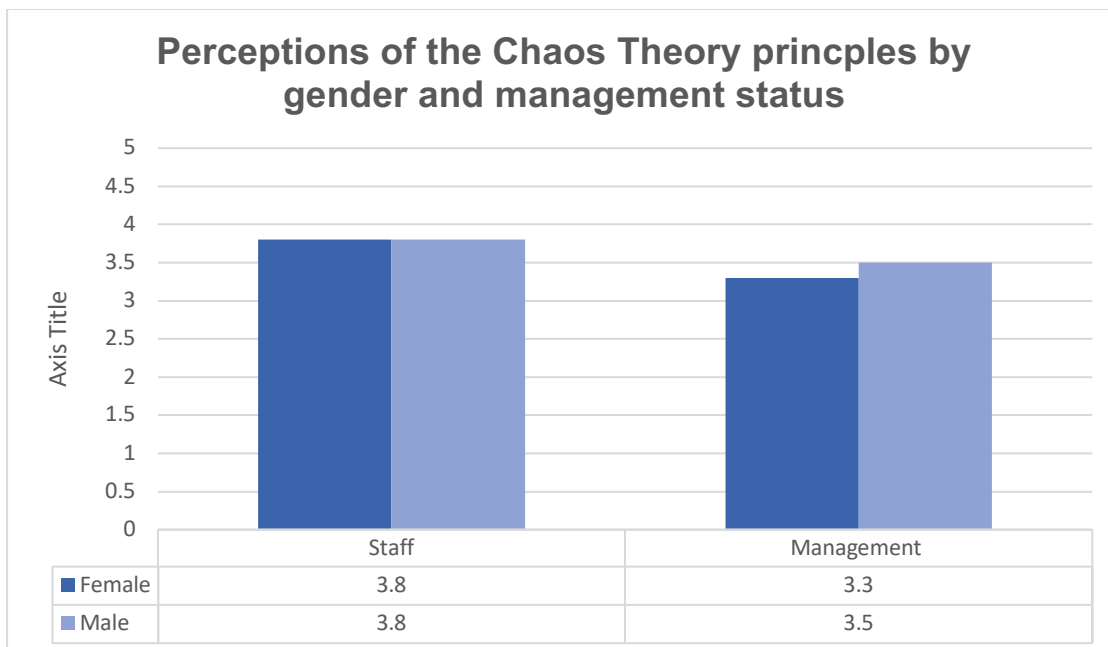


Figure 5.8 – Perceptions of the Chaos Theory principle by gender and management status

It is important to note that the sample size for female management was not representative because there was only one respondent (n=1). However, across genders and management statuses, the cross-tabulation analysis shown in Figure 5.8 reliably represents perceptions of Chaos Theory principles. The ratings are constantly in the range of 3.5 to 3.8 suggesting that there is significant agreement and prevailing agreement across the sample. These findings highlight the shared view of different genders and management statuses on the principles of the Chaos Theory. This is confirmed by the conceptual framework (Section 3.2) that the Chaos Theory as a framework is a process driven model that is flexible to dynamic organisations.

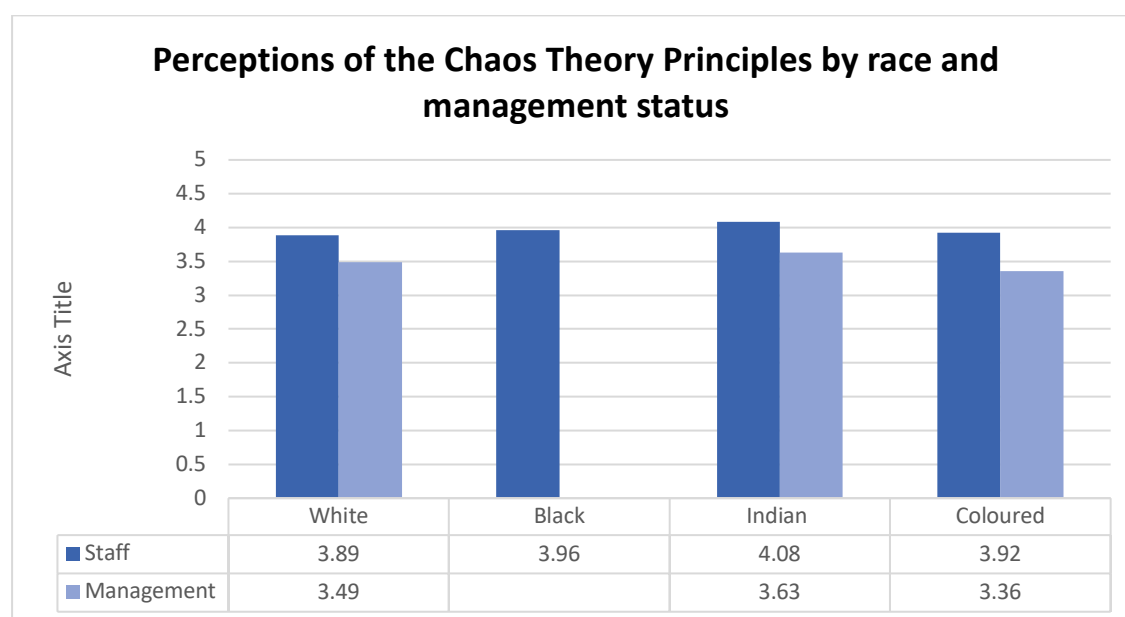


Figure 5.9 – Perceptions of the Chaos Theory Principles according to race and management status

Withholding white and coloured management, Figure 5.9 reveals that regardless of race and management status, respondents' perceptions of the Chaos Theory principles show substantial agreement (3.63–4.08), suggesting a common viewpoint throughout people from diverse cultural backgrounds. The conclusion that Chaos Theory ideas are widely accepted inside the organisation is supported by the scores' consistency across the management status and racial groups. Regarding how white and coloured management see control and the concepts of Chaos Theory, a clear trend can be observed. Lower agreement when compared to the remainder of the sample is indicated by graph 5.7, which displays a pattern similar to that of graph 5.9. In particular, there is a neutral degree of agreement between coloured management

(3.36) and white management (3.49) regarding perceptions of the principles of Chaos Theory. This alignment is in line with the control perceptions shown in Figure 5.7. The discrepancy in these findings holds significant importance on the perceptions of different races and specifically white and coloured management on the Chaos Theory principles. Supported by the literature, South Africa is still addressing post-colonial challenges that impact diversity in communication processes and theories (Louw and Jackson, 2008:16-17, Nkoma *et al.*, 2015:6).

k. 5.3.2.3(b) Cross Tabulation Data Analysis Summary

Taking into account the variables of race, gender and management status, the cross-tabulation results provide insightful findings about respondents' opinions regarding the central tendency measures of information flow, control and Chaos Theory principles. Overall, a consistent tendency among the responders has been noted, independent of these considerations. However, white and coloured management respondents revealed a notable pattern. When it comes to the information flow, these respondents typically indicate higher levels of agreement (strongly agree and agree). On the other hand, when it comes to control and Chaos Theory principles, they agree less (neutrally) than other respondents.

5.3.3 Communication Channel and Tools

This section of descriptive statistics presents the data collected in section two of the questionnaire and presents the data relating to the types of internal communication tools used by both management and staff when communicating day-to-day information, both to their manager as well as the tools used by the respondent's manager to communicate with them.

		MANAGEMENT	STAFF
Communication tool used to communicate day-to-day information to the manager	Informal Communication	5	5
	WhatsApp Group	4	4
	Telephone	3	
	WhatsApp Group	2	3
	Face-to-face meetings	1	1
	Departmental Meetings		2

Communication tool used by the Line Manager to communicate day-to-day information to the staff	Departmental Meetings	5	
	Telephone	4	
	WhatsApp Group	3	3
	Telephone	2	2
	Departmental Meetings	1	2
	Informal Communication		5
	Informal Communication		4
	Face-to-face meetings		1

Table 5.60 - Internal Communication Channels

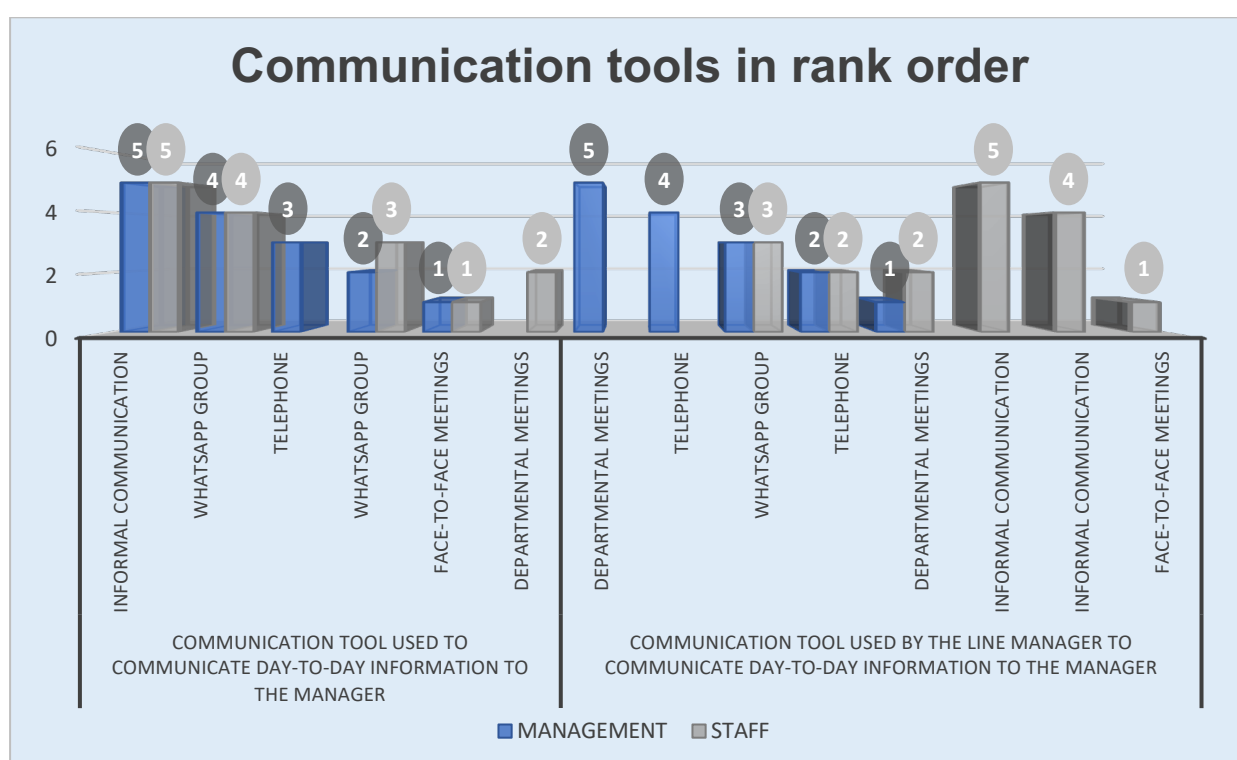


Figure 5.10 – Communication tools in rank order

According to Table 5.59 and Figure 5.10, most respondents from staff and management mostly use *informal communication* to communicate day-to-day information to their managers. However, these respondents use *face-to-face meetings* the least. Additionally, departmental meetings are mostly utilised by line managers to communicate daily information to their managers, according to management respondents. As for staff, they believe that *Line Managers* mostly use *informal communication* to communicate daily information to their managers.

DIVISION/BRANCH	RANK	Management		Staff	
		TOOLS	COUNT	Tools	Count
Pinetown	MOST	Informal Communication	10	Informal Communication	20
Durban		Informal Communication	5	Informal Communication	16
Truck Centre New Germany		Departmental Meetings	2	Informal Communication	6
Pietermaritzburg		Informal Communication	3	Informal Communication	11
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		Informal Communication	1	Informal Communication	2
Pinetown	[2nd choice]	WhatsApp Group	5	Telephone	6
Durban		Telephone	3	WhatsApp Group	8
Truck Centre New Germany		Informal Communication	2	Informal Communication	3
Pietermaritzburg		WhatsApp Group & Telephone	4	Informal Communication	6
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		WhatsApp Group	1	WhatsApp Group & Telephone	2
Pinetown	[3rd choice]	Telephone	6	WhatsApp Group & Face-to-face meetings	12
Durban		Telephone	3	Departmental Meetings	5
Truck Centre New Germany		WhatsApp Group	2	WhatsApp Group	4
Pietermaritzburg		Telephone	2	Informal Communication & WhatsApp Group	8
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		Telephone	1	Departmental Meetings & WhatsApp Group	2
Pinetown	[4th choice]	WhatsApp Group	5	Departmental Meetings & Email	12
Durban		Face-to-face meetings	2	WhatsApp Group & Face-to-face meetings	8
Truck Centre New Germany		WhatsApp Group, Face-to-face meetings & Telephone	3	Departmental Meetings & WhatsApp Group	4
Pietermaritzburg		Departmental Meetings	3	Email	4

Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg	LEAST	Email	1	Departmental Meetings & Email	2
Pinetown		Departmental Meetings	4	Face-to-face meetings	8
Durban		WhatsApp Group & Face-to-face meetings	4	Face-to-face meetings	4
Truck Centre New Germany		Departmental Meetings, Email & Face-to-face meetings	3	Email	3
Pietermaritzburg		Departmental Meetings, Email, WhatsApp Group & Face-to-face meetings	4	Departmental Meetings	5
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		Face-to-face meetings	1	Face-to-face meetings	2

Table 5.61 - Communication tools that respondents used in the day-to-day communications with their manager (by division)

According to Table 5.61 above *informal communication* is the most used tool by both staff and management respondents when communicating day-to-day information with their respective managers. *Face-to-face meetings* and *departmental* meetings were the least used communication tool. These findings highlight the importance of informal communication in managing emergent change that are a result of day-to-day interactions. Supported by the literature, informal communication is viewed by employees as being authentic and is important in operational efficiency (Men, 2012:6-7, Magalhães, 2009:4)

DIVISION/BRANCH	RANK	TOOLS	COUNT	COUNT	
		MANAGEMENT		STAFF	
Pinetown	MOST	Departmental Meetings	6	Informal Communication	15
Durban		Departmental Meetings	4	Informal Communication	15
Truck Centre New Germany		Departmental Meetings	3	Informal Communication	6
Pietermaritzburg		Departmental Meetings	3	Informal Communication	11

Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		Departmental Meetings	1	Informal Communication	2
Pinetown	[2nd choice]	Departmental Meetings	4	Departmental Meetings & Telephone	12
Durban		Telephone	4	Informal Communication, Telephone & Departmental Meetings	12
Truck Centre New Germany		Departmental Meetings	2	Informal Communication	3
Pietermaritzburg		Telephone	3	Informal Communication	6
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		WhatsApp Group	1	WhatsApp Group & Telephone	2
Pinetown	[3rd choice]	Email & WhatsApp Group	6	Telephone	8
Durban		Departmental Meetings	3	WhatsApp Group	6
Truck Centre New Germany		WhatsApp Group	2	WhatsApp Group	3
Pietermaritzburg		WhatsApp Group	2	WhatsApp Group	6
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		Email	1	Email & WhatsApp Group	2
Pinetown	[4th choice]	WhatsApp Group	4	WhatsApp Group & Face-to-face meetings	14
Durban		Telephone	3	Departmental Meetings	5
Truck Centre New Germany		Email , WhatsApp Group & Face-to-face meetings	3	Departmental Meetings	3
Pietermaritzburg		Email	3	Email & Telephone	8
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		Telephone	1	Departmental Meetings	2
Pinetown	LEAST	Departmental Meetings	4	Face-to-face meetings	8
Durban		Email	3	Face-to-face meetings	7
Truck Centre New Germany		Departmental Meetings, Face-to-face meetings & Telephone	3	Email & WhatsApp Group	4
Pietermaritzburg		Departmental Meetings	2	Departmental Meetings	6
Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg		Face-to-face meetings	1	Face-to-face meetings	2

Table 5.62 - Communication tools used by respondents' managers in the day-to-day communications with them (by division)

The results from Table 5.62 above indicate that for management respondents, *departmental meetings* are the most used communication tool by their respondents' managers when communicating day-to-day information to them. However, staff respondents indicated that *informal communication* was the most used tool when their managers communicate day-to-day information to them. The least used tool by both management and staff respondents was *departmental meetings, email and face-to-face meetings*. These findings highlight the implications of using information rich channels of communication in dynamic organisations. Supported by the literature, channels of communication that are information rich, such as face-to-face communication and informal communication are essential for self-organisation (Wheatley, 1993).

5.4 Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics; namely, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) are utilised in this analysis to investigate differences in central tendency measures among several categories, particularly differentiating between staff and management and organisational divisions. When determining if there are significant variations between these groups, the ANOVA is a useful technique that can reveal important information about possible differences in the central tendencies of the variables being studied (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007:88). To determine whether any detected variations are statistically significant, the study compares variances within and between management and staff as well as between different divisions.

5.4.1 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure (Management): Flow of Information

The ANOVA analysis performed for management respondents is shown in Table 5.63 below, with a particular emphasis on the central tendency measure of the information flow.

DATA SUMMARY	Pinetown	Durban	PMB	Trucks New Germany	Trucks PMB
N	33	24	15	9	3
$\sum x$	97	77	53	26	11
Mean	2.95	3.21	3.53	2.89	3.67
$\sum x^2$	339	287	209	94	41
SD	1.2976	1.3181	1.2459	1.5366	0.5774

ANOVA Summary	DF	SS	MS	F-STAT	P-VALUE
Between Groups	4	6.07	1.52	0.89	0
Within Groups	79	135.13	1.71		
Total	83	141.2			

Table 5.63 – Data and ANOVA summary on the central tendency measure of flow of information (management respondents)

Nuanced differences were found when the communication channel richness of the different divisions under study. A balanced environment is suggested by Pinetown's mean score of 2.94, although Durban exhibits a marginal improvement at 3.21. With the highest mean of 3.53, PMB stands out as having communication rich channels. Different dynamics can be seen in Trucks PMB (3.67) and Trucks New Germany (2.89). A moderate effect size and substantial difference ($F = 0.89$, $p = 0$) are confirmed by statistical analysis.

This finding emphasises how crucial it is to understand and deal with the various communication dynamics that exist inside various organisational divisions. Establishing and maintaining a cohesive organisational culture as well as promoting collaboration all depend on efficient lines of communication. Thus, better organisational performance and effectiveness might result from recognising and utilising each division's unique communication routes. The literature (Section 2.25.4.1) confirms the importance of flow of communication that is information rich to maintain and sustain relationships in an organisation.

5.4.2 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure (Management): Control

Table 5.64 below illustrates the ANOVA analysis conducted for management respondents, specifically focusing on the central tendency measure of control measures.

	Pinetown	Durban	PMB	Trucks New Germany	Trucks PMB
N	48	110	50	26	11
Σx	162	359	167	82	38
Mean	3.38	3.26	3.34	3.15	3.45
Σx^2	614	1331	631	300	140
SD	1.1962	1.2091	1.2224	1.2866	0.9342

	DF	SS	MS	F-STAT	P-VALUE
Between Groups	4	1.4	0.35	0.24	0
Within Groups	240	349.93	1.46		
Total	244	351.33			

Table 5.64 – Data and ANOVA summary on the central tendency measure of control measures (management respondents)

A highly significant difference in central tendency was seen generally between these groups ($DF(4, 240) = 0.24, p < 0.001$) according to the data. In contrast to Pietermaritzburg ($M = 3.45$) and Durban ($M = 3.26$), Pinetown was found to have a notably distinct central tendency ($M = 3.38$). This shows that compared to Durban and Pietermaritzburg, Pinetown's administration, structures and procedures are very different. Moreover, the Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg division showed a significant deviation in central tendency ($M = 3.45$) from Durban, suggesting differences in management or operations. The significance of adapting organisational tactics to the particular dynamics within the Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg division is highlighted by this study.

The aforementioned results highlight the significance of customising organisational tactics to suit the distinct dynamics present in Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg. Nonetheless, no statistically significant distinctions were discovered among Pietermaritzburg, Truck Centre New Germany and Durban, suggesting comparatively

uniform central tendencies of control measures among these divisions. This uniformity raises the possibility of standardising methods in some operational areas and may indicate shared organisational traits between various locations. Confirmed by the literature that even though there are standard procedures and policies that management essentially have the autonomy as change agents to decide on the implementation of their own processes (Wheatley, 1993).

5.4.3 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure (Management): Chaos Theory Principles

The ANOVA analysis performed for management respondents is shown in Table 5.65 below, with a particular emphasis on the central tendency measure for the Chaos Theory principles.

	Pinetown	Durban	PMB	Trucks New Germany	Trucks PMB
N	407	272	114	200	36
$\sum x$	1421	1039	406	720	125
Mean	3.49	3.82	3.56	3.6	3.47
$\sum x^2$	5603	4361	1646	2956	467
SD	1.2572	1.203	1.3306	1.3525	0.9706

	DF	SS	MS	F-STAT	P-VALUE
Between Groups	4	18.98	4.74	2.98	0
Within Groups	1024	1630.96	1.59		
Total	1028	1649.93			

Table 5.65 – Data and ANOVA summary on the central tendency measure of the chaos theory principles (management respondents)

The data showed that the central tendency was significantly different overall ($F(4, 1024) = 2.98, p < 0.001$). Post hoc analysis that focuses on the divisions might shed more light on the nature of these variations. When the distinct group features were examined, Durban had the highest mean revenue ($M = 3.82$), closely followed by Trucks New Germany ($M = 3.60$). On the other hand, Pietermaritzburg ($M = 3.56$) was

in the middle, and Pinetown ($M = 3.49$) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg ($M = 3.47$) had somewhat lower averages. Standard deviations within each group revealed some variance in the variability, with Trucks New Germany having the highest standard deviation ($SD = 1.3525$) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg having the lowest ($SD = 0.9706$).

These findings underscore the use of those processes and procedures against the Chaos Theory principles. As an example of how Chaos Theory principles might be successfully used, Durban emerges as a revenue leader. Understanding the impact of Chaos Theory principles on revenue dynamics enables organisations to effectively manage complexity and cultivate flexibility, which is essential for sustained success and self-organisation. The standard deviation variation reveals variations in revenue stability and consistency among the divisions, highlighting the necessity for the implementation of the Chaos Theory as a framework for diverse and dynamic organisation. Supported by the conceptual framework (Section 3.2), the Chaos Theory framework is process driven that allows for flexibility to manage emergent change and allow for diversity.

5.4.4 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure (Management): Overall Analysis

Truck Centre PMB continuously shows itself as a high-performing division in each of the three constructs: Chaos Theory revenue collection, control measures and information flow. Low variability and continuously high mean values point to a reliable and effective operational performance. This constancy could be a sign of strong management procedures or tested procedures at Trucks PMB. In contrast, Trucks New Germany shows greater variability and a consistently lower mean across all constructs. This performance disparity could be an indication of problems or changes within the department. A greater degree of unpredictability or inconsistency that might necessitate closer examination is implied by the higher variability, whilst the lower mean signals that there might be opportunities for operational efficiency improvement. In all three constructs, Durban and PMB consistently show intermediate values for both mean and variability. This implies a performance that is in the middle of the range of high and low values, which is balanced. Durban and PMB might be considered

divisions with steady and moderate performance, perhaps benefiting from preserving operational stability and minimising swings.

5.4.5 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure (Staff): Flow of Information

The ANOVA analysis performed for staff respondents is shown in Table 5.65 below, with a particular emphasis on the central tendency measure of the information flow.

	Pinetown	Durban	PMB	Trucks New Germany	Trucks PMB
N	26	18	6	11	2
Σx	77	64	24	48	9
Mean	2.96	3.56	4	4.36	4.5
Σx^2	269	248	98	212	41
SD	1.28	1.0966	0.6325	0.5045	0.7071

	DF	SS	MS	F-STAT	P-VALUE
Between Groups	4	27.08	6.77	5.91	0
Within Groups	58	66.45	1.15		
Total	62	93.53			

Table 5.66 – Data and ANOVA summary on the central tendency measure of flow of information (staff respondents)

Truck Centre New Germany, Pietermaritzburg and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg showed higher perceived information flow compared to Pinetown and Durban. The mean scores for each group differed. Staff members appear to perceive information flow at a moderate degree as indicated by the dataset's overall mean of 3.876. The standard deviations showed that the responses varied, ranging from 0.5045 to 1.28. There were statistically significant differences between the groups for the "Flow of Information" construct, according to the ensuing ANOVA analysis. In particular, there were notable mean differences in how information flow was viewed by Pinetown, Durban, Truck Centre New Germany, Pietermaritzburg and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg. This finding suggests that there were notable differences in the

communication dynamics between various places, indicating areas that might benefit from improvement in particular divisions. The literature confirms that although there are control measures in place to establish a common company culture and processes and procedures that guide how information flows, management as “gatekeepers” can control the flow of information (Ströh and Jaatinen, 2002).

5.4.6 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure (Staff): Control

The ANOVA analysis performed for staff respondents is shown in Table 5.67 below, with a particular emphasis on the central tendency measure of control measures.

	Pinetown	Durban	PMB	Trucks New Germany	Trucks PMB
N	312	214	66	121	22
$\sum x$	1172	794	237	432	84
Mean	3.76	3.71	3.59	3.57	3.82
$\sum x^2$	4726	3114	957	1732	346
SD	1.0199	0.8882	1.2767	1.2572	1.097

	DF	SS	MS	F-STAT	P-VALUE
Between Groups	4	4.22	1.06	0.95	0
Within Groups	730	812.42	1.11		
Total	734	816.65			

Table 5.67 – Data and ANOVA summary on the central tendency measure of control measures (staff respondents)

Subtle differences were seen in the mean scores for each group, with Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg showing the highest mean (3.82) and Truck Centre New Germany the lowest (3.59). The dataset's overall mean, which was 3.689, indicated a modest degree of perceived control over management, structures and procedures. The standard deviations, which show variation in responses, varied from 0.8882 to 1.2767. The purpose of the ensuing ANOVA study was to identify any noteworthy variations in the groups' perceptions of control. On the other hand, the ANOVA summary shows

that there are no statistically significant differences between the groups in terms of perceived control, with an F-statistic of 0.95 and an associated p-value of 0. The analysis conducted Between Groups and Within Groups provide additional evidence that the variance in group means is not statistically significant.

5.4.7 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure (Staff): The Chaos Theory Principles

The ANOVA analysis performed for staff respondents is shown in Table 5.68 below, with a particular emphasis on the central tendency measure of the Chaos Theory.

	Pinetown	Durban	PMB	Trucks New Germany	Trucks PMB
N	985	735	210	407	66
Σx	3751	2776	797	1542	238
Mean	3.81	3.78	3.8	3.79	3.61
Σx^2	15407	11374	3353	6362	982
SD	1.0682	1.1008	1.2531	1.1315	1.3798

	DF	SS	MS	F-STAT	P-VALUE
Between Groups	4	5.4	1.35	1.08	0
Within Groups	2398	2383.96	1.24		
Total	2402	2989.36			

Table 5.68 – Data and ANOVA summary on the central tendency measure of the chaos theory principles (staff respondents)

Subtle differences were seen in the mean scores for each group, with Pinetown having the highest mean (3.81) and Truck Centre Pietermaritzburg having the lowest (3.61). The dataset's overall mean was 3.755, which suggests that the organisation as a

whole has a modest degree of perceived adherence to Chaos Theory concepts. The standard deviations, which show variation in each respondent's response, ranged from 1.0682 to 1.3798. The next step was to perform an ANOVA analysis to find any significant variations between the groups' perceived adherence to the principles of Chaos Theory. An F-statistic of 1.08 and a corresponding p-value of 0 in the ANOVA summary show that there are no statistically significant differences between the groups. The variance in group means is not statistically significant, according to the Between Groups and Within Groups analysis.

Despite strong findings for other measures of central tendency, there are no statistically significant variations in the perception of control measures between groups, which raises several interesting possibilities. First of all, it might suggest a standardised organisational strategy for control mechanisms within departments, leading to a common understanding among staff members regardless of where they work. This is confirmed by the literature (Section 2.16.5 and 3.2.1) where organisational structure, strategy and culture guide processes and procedures across the entire company. Alternatively, it could imply that although perceptions of control are stable, other variables, such as leadership philosophies or communication methods differ greatly and affect other measures of central tendency. Furthermore, the absence of statistical significance can highlight the necessity of conducting more in-depth research on the subtleties of control perceptions, including qualitative evaluations of organisational culture and employee experiences.

5.4.8 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure (Staff): Overall Analysis

Organisational dynamics among different groups are shown by comparing the three ANOVA findings for central tendency measures, with a focus on "Flow of Information," "Control (Management, Structures and Processes)" and "Chaos Theory Principles." Starting with the "Flow of Information," the ANOVA study showed notable variations between the groups. With the highest mean score, Truck Centre New Germany stood out as having a stronger sense of information flow. On the other hand, no statistically significant differences were discovered between the groups in the examination of "Control," suggesting a uniform organisational approach throughout management, structures and procedures. Conversely, the examination of the "Chaos Theory Principles" revealed no noteworthy distinctions between the groups, indicating a

consistent comprehension and compliance with these principles throughout the entire organisation.

5.4.8 ANOVA Analysis of Central Tendency Measure: Comparative Analysis (management and staff)

Managers and staff show differences in their attitudes between groups across all three central tendency measures. There may be discrepancies in the communication dynamics between managers and employees as indicated by the "Flow of Information" construct's notable differences. On the other hand, managers and employees have similar opinions about "Control" and "Chaos Theory Principles," with little variation across the groups. These results suggest that some organisational features, like control mechanisms and conformity to Chaos Theory principles are universally understood and implemented, regardless of hierarchical positions as suggested in the literature in Section 2.16.5.1 that communication is a basic human need that transcends differences. All things considered, the comparison study identifies particular domains, including the "Flow of Information" where actions could improve communication dynamics. On the other hand, the widely held beliefs about "Control" and "Chaos Theory Principles" point to broadly accepted organisational concepts. This thorough understanding can direct interventions and strategic choices meant to promote a unified corporate culture.

PART TWO

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The previous section presented both the descriptive and inferential statistics. The interpretations of the data that were based on a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics will be thoroughly explained in this section. In organising and aligning the findings with the study aims and the study objectives, the discussion findings will be discussed in sequence to these objectives. The discussion of findings is presented below:

5.5 The efficiency of internal organisational communication in managing emerging change (Objective 1)

An identifiable pattern and correlation between the flow of information, interdepartmental communication and staff engagement dynamics during organisational challenges are revealed by analysing data from Tables 5.4, 5.7, 5.26, 5.17, 5.22, and 5.38. Remarkably, only 19.2% of employees and 18.2% of managers surveyed in Pinetown agreed that departmental communication is accurate and free flowing. Additionally, somewhat more than 50% of the participants concurred that they were not engaged when facing organisational issues. Interestingly, most said that departmental communication is encouraged (Table 5.17), clear (Table 5.22) and believable, open and honest (Table 5.38) despite the general belief in Pinetown that information is neither accurate nor free flowing. When it came to the belief that communication is truthful and free-flowing, Pinetown respondents were noticeably less agreeable than respondents in other divisions. These results imply that despite encouragement and clarity in communication, there seems to be a significant barrier to knowledge transfer inside Pinetown's organisational hierarchy, in other words the efficiency of internal communication during emergent change.

Furthermore, conclusions drawn from Table 5.26's data, which measures the extent to which staff members are consulted during problems, provide insights on emergent change inside the organisational framework and are consistent with emergent change management and Chaos Theory viewpoints. The importance of data from encounters at the local level is emphasised, highlighting the crucial role that internal communication plays in enabling emergent transformation. The complex dynamics including information flow, interdepartmental collaboration and staff involvement during challenges are collectively highlighted by these findings, which provide insightful information about organisational subtleties that may affect the successful management of emergent change.

Symmetrical communication, which is covered in Section 1.16.6 of the literature and Section 3.2.2 (iv) of the conceptual framework highlights how organisational hierarchy affects the flow of communication in the context of organisational communication. According to Men (2012:6-7), the evidence argues that for optimal functioning, communication should be coordinated rather than regulated. But the way that communication is seen to happen, especially the way that management is filtering information (Table 5.4) seems to be more in line with control procedures than coordination. According to the conceptual framework, internal organisational

communication needs to be flexible and well-coordinated in order to be used as a maintenance tool for controlling emergent change.

Furthermore, from the perspective of the Chaos Theory's bifurcation point and within an organisational context, like a departmental difficulty or problem, the flow of information during these events are critical to the successful management of emergent change and the promotion of self-organisation, according to Theodoridis (2009:288). Table 6.31 emphasises the importance of management's involvement in staff engagement during emergent changes related to complexity adaptation. Peppers (2014:para. 2) goes on to say that information flow is a necessary condition for the development of autonomy, engagement and empowerment - all of which are critical components of self-organisation during change. Furthermore, the literature (Section 2.2.2.3 *(a.i)*) indicates that emergent changes mostly happen at the local level, where staff input and consultation are crucial for managing emergent change and lessening the emphasis on management's isolated decision-making (Gilstrap 2005a; Freimuth 2006; Peppers 2014:para 2-5). This is because rich information availability necessitates staff input and engagement.

The findings emphasised how important efficient communication is, especially when it comes to managing emergent change. The study's conceptualization of emergent transformations includes the range of difficulties faced by managers at the local and managerial levels, with an emphasis on the role that internal communication plays in assisting these transitions. It was clear that the fluidity and symmetry of communication channels have a major impact on an organisation's adaptive capacity when viewed through the lens of the Chaos Theory, which emphasizes the need for open communication for self-organisation and successful management of emergent change.

The results of the study provide strong evidence in favour of the literature that has already been presented about how important internal communication is to managing emergent change. Moreover, the results confirm that incorporating a Chaos Theory framework with existing literature is appropriate, emphasising the usefulness and importance of these theoretical stances in comprehending organisational dynamics during dynamic transitions. The findings, however, also challenge certain aspects of the literature concerning the appropriateness of current models of internal

communication in facilitating emergent change within diverse workforces. These limitations are further discussed in the next section in the presentation of the discussion of findings for objective two.

5.6 The appropriateness of current models of internal organisational communication from a global perspective (Objective 2).

In framing the objectives of the study, Section 2.15.2 of the literature review presented the current models of internal organisational communication and examined these models in relation to their appropriateness and application within a South African context. The researcher analysed the following internal communication models: Steyn and Puth (2000) Strategic Communication Theory and Corporate Communication Strategy Model; Asif and Sargeants (2000) Internal Communication Model; Welch and Jackson (2007) Internal Corporate Communication Model; Verwey and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2003) Communication Triad at Work; and Van Riel (1995) Integrated Communication Model. The literature review not only analysed these models against the backdrop of their usefulness and appropriateness to a South African cultural landscape but also in doing so presented the limitations of these models against the backdrop of the conceptual framework, the Chaos theory. For the purpose of presenting these findings, the researcher has summarised the findings below:

- **Steyn and Puth (2000) Strategic Communication Theory and Corporate Communication Strategy Model** – One of the limitations of this model is the step-by-step, sequential process of the model. With culture being a central element to managing emergent change and emergent change being driven by day-to-day changes, having a sequential, step-by-step model that focusses on strategy is limiting. Priesmeyer (1992:112) confirms this finding as it states that as the dynamic nature of culture influences the workplace environment, a step-by-step model is limiting in ensuring inclusion and diversity.

In addition to the above, the implementation of the plan is excluded from the model. With modern organisations constantly changing as well as the culture of both the individuals working in the organisation as well as the organisations culture at the local level being a dynamic interaction, a step-by-step plan is obsolete.

Furthermore, the concept of a “plan” within the concept of the Chaos Theory is equally obsolete as it does not allow for flexibility for the system to adapt to changes, such as cultural and diversity changes. The literature review and conceptual framework confirms this finding (Lee, 1998:182, Becker, 2019, Galacgac and Singh, 2015, Hudson, 2000).

The model is also top-down dominated and there seems to be little to no consultation with employees. Emergent change and policy and strategy, including communication needs to be inclusive and involve all employees for there to be shared meaning and thus create self-organisation that allows for an organisation to manage emergent change. Furthermore, by not having an inclusive process, culture and diversity will not be integrated. This finding is confirmed by the literature and conceptual framework and supported by Dipple *et al.* (2014), Galacgac and Singh (2015), deJong and deBoer (2003), Wheatley (1994) and Cartwright (1991).

Lastly, the model limits the view of analysing the environment to the organisations mission and vision and does not include culture that is developed as a result of local interaction. From the view of the Chaos Theory, Stigmergy is important in facilitating self-organisation and incorporating culture and diversity through local interactions, which further allows an organisation to better respond to emergent change. Stigmergy cannot be controlled by a mission and vision that was developed at senior level and can only be a result of local interaction. This finding is confirmed by the literature and conceptual framework (Hume, 2010:103, Alvarez, 2020:para. 5-8). However, the findings in Section 5.7 -5.9 will offer descriptive statistics to support this finding.

- **Asif and Sargeants (2000) Internal Communication Model** – Firstly, the limitations of the model is that it focuses on outcomes that benefit the organisation and does not include the role of internal communication in managing emergent change. Change is essential in placing an organisation at the Edge of Chaos where it is at its most adaptive. With culture, inclusion and diversity being essential in this process, the model is limited from a *glocal* perspective. This finding is supported by the literature and conceptual work (Lee, 1998:182, Kumi et al., 2019, McLuhan, 2003).

Furthermore, the model does not acknowledge nor incorporate the importance of organisational culture and individual culture as an influencing factor in internal communication processes (Gibb, 1965, Schriefer, 2016).

- **Welch and Jackson (2007) Internal Corporate Communication Model** - Although the model does recognise two-way communication, it does however place strategic direction exclusively in the hands of managers with no interaction or consolidation with staff. For there to be shared meaning and to have strategy that is both culturally inclusive and diverse, staff needs to be included in the strategic direction of an organisation. This finding is confirmed by the literature and conceptual framework and supported by Dipple *et al.* (2014), Galacgac and Singh (2015), deJong and deBoer (2003), Wheatley (1994) and Cartwright (1991).

Furthermore, the model excludes the impact of any type of change and its impact on the communication process. The Chaos Theory places critical importance on change in managing diverse workforces and with communication being the foundation of managing these interactions. It is the view of the researcher that emergent needs to be central to internal communications processes in order to manage a diverse workforce. This finding is supported by the literature and conceptual work (Lee, 1998:182, Kumi *et al.*, 2019:124, McLuhan, 2003). Lastly, the model places strategic managers as the drivers of communication. However, in order for change to be inclusive and diverse, change needs to be driven at all levels and not just by a minority of senior management. This finding is supported by the literature and conceptual work of (Eveleigh, 2019:1).

- **Verwey and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2003) Communication Triad at Work** - Limited focus in on the role of employees in the communication process and the central focus is on achieving organisational goals. Communication in diverse workforces is dynamic and in order for it to be inclusive and adapt to change, requires interaction at all levels. This finding is confirmed by the literature and conceptual framework and supported by the authors Dipple *et al.* (2014), Galacgac and Singh (2015), deJong and deBoer (2003), Wheatley (1994). Lastly, the model is strategically focused and does not acknowledge the importance of day-to-day communications that manage emergent, day-to-day changes. Managing or

maintaining emergent change with internal communication allows for a system to be flexible and adapt to changes. This finding is supported by the literature and conceptual work of (Lee, 1998:182, Kumi *et al.*, 2019:131, McLuhan, 2003).

- **Van Riel (1995) Integrated Communication Model** - The model positions internal communication exclusively as an organisational function. For internal communication to be inclusive and diverse from the perspective of the Chaos Theory, managers and supervisors need to be positioned as change agents as they are key in facilitating diversity and inclusion at the local level. This finding is supported by the literature and conceptual work (Lee, 1998:182, Kumi *et al.*, 2019, McLuhan, 2003).

Furthermore, the model presents a process that is driven top-down. This process is significantly limiting in managing emergent change that is constantly changing according to the diversity needs and changes at the local level interaction. This finding is confirmed by the literature and conceptual framework and supported by Dipple *et al.* (2014), Galacgac and Singh (2015), deJong and deBoer (2003), Wheatley (1994) and Cartwright (1991).

Although process driven, the model limits this process to management, organisational and marketing communication. The model does not focus on internal communication and the role of employees at all levels have on this process. This finding is confirmed by the literature and conceptual framework and supported by Dipple *et al.* (2014), Galacgac and Singh (2015), deJong and deBoer (2003), Wheatley (1994) and Cartwright (1991).

Lastly, the role of managers in this model is isolated and not directly linked to their role in the internal communication process. As change agents that maintain communication at the local level, their role has to be fully integrated into the process. This finding is confirmed by the literature and conceptual framework and supported by Sterman (1989:322) and Locomote (2021:1).

5.7 To determine the efficiency of current internal organisational communication processes within the various hierarchical levels of the selected organisation under study (Objective 3).

In analyzing the data pertaining to Objective 3 and the resulting patterns that emerge, the discussion will be organised around these patterns that have been found in relation to the objective. This strategy ensures that the objective is carefully examined in light of the identified patterns, offering a clear comprehension of the results within the parameters of this objective. The discussion of these findings is presented from the perspective of the impact of managerial control, organisational hierarchy and control mechanisms, such as policies, procedures and structures on internal communication processes.

In addressing Objective 3 of the study, these emerging patterns are discussed below:

- **Influence of senior and line management involvement in control measures and the perceptions of regulation and efficiency of communication at different hierarchal levels**

The information in Tables 5.15 to 5.18 and 5.52 to 5.55 clarifies the complex connection between interdepartmental operations and control measures, especially in the setting of organisational hierarchy. The results show a strong correlation between the degree to which line managers and employees are impacted by senior management's exercise of control over them and how this affects interdepartmental coordination and operations. Comparing Pinetown Management and New Germany Truck Centre Management to other divisions, they demonstrated lower levels of agreeableness in control measures and interdepartmental activities, indicating a tendency to operate in "silos".

These findings support the study's conceptual framework. Staff employed by these managers also exhibit this pattern, suggesting a cascade impact of control from upper to lower organisational levels. Organisations are intricate systems by nature, meaning that modifications made to one department may have an impact on other departments as well. The ability of the system to adapt to change and self-organize is impacted when important individuals, including managers, operate alone in departments (Rensburg and Ströh, 1998). The butterfly effect (presented in Section 2.2.2.3 – a-i), which holds that minor adjustments can have a big

influence on individuals or other departments within the system is further supported by this data. Senior management uses policies and procedures to impose control over line managers, who in turn apply the same control to employees at lower levels. This also includes the manner in which information and communication flows.

Furthermore, excluding the Pietermaritzburg division, a significant gap exists between staff and management perceptions regarding the existence of a long, formal process for sharing new ideas (Table 5.20). Only half of the staff respondents agreed that their perspectives are actively sought out when policies, procedures and SOPs need to be updated, indicating that they believe their autonomy is limited (Table 5.41). This disengagement from organisational procedures affects communication on several levels by giving the impression that one is subject to constrictive policies. Added to this, the data seems to indicate a parallel pattern between the perception of sharing new ideas and processes and the type of communication used between line managers and senior management. For example, Pietermaritzburg and Pietermaritzburg Truck Centre divisions (100%) used informal communication to communicate to their managers. These divisions, 75% and 100% respectfully, disagreed with the statement that there was a long formal process to follow to share new ideas and processes. This is in contrast to the other divisions under study, whose management preferred WhatsApp, telephone, email and departmental meetings (Figure 5.11).

Furthermore, data showed a correlation between staff respondents' engagement in updating and modifying policies, procedures and SOPs (Table 6.41) and the effect that this involvement had on how these procedures subsequently governed how they communicated at various levels. Consequently, the perception of autonomy being limited by rules and procedures has an impact on the development of learning organisations. The majority of staff respondents in Table 5.41 indicated that their opinions were not sought when updating or changing policies, procedures or standard operating procedures. In contrast, the majority of these respondents equally agreed that they were subject to procedures and policies that governed their communication at various levels (agreement ranging from 50 to 100%).

In addition, the data from Table 5.41 showed that most management across the divisions under study agreed that their input was sought in SOPs, policies and procedures but they disagreed with the table 6.42's question on the regulation of their communication by policies and procedures. The results thus imply that participation in the revision and updating of rules and procedures directly affects the flow of information at various levels.

The literature reviewed in Section 2.3.5.1 confirms these findings and critically highlights the significance of lower-level staff involvement in policies, procedures and SOPs, given that the majority of emergent change happens at the local level. Furthermore, the conceptual framework, emphasise shared meaning as necessary for the creation of a learning organisation and this cannot happen if local staff members are not engaged in these organisational procedures. According to Nakata (2009), shared meaning is produced collaboratively through local interaction; as a result, it develops from below rather than from the top or at the level of organisational culture and climate.

Furthermore, from a communications perspective, literature on intercultural communication (presented in Section 2.16.6) suggests that for shared meaning to exist it needs to follow a process that includes transaction; interaction; irreversible and unrepeatable; culture specific; and content and relationships (Ford, 2022, Hill, 2009, Gharajedaghi, 2011a:263). These findings furthermore challenge the current models of internal organisational communication as presented in 5.5, especially from their limitations in a bottom-up process that facilitates diversity.

- **The impact of the efficiency of internal communication processes on perceived autonomy, operational dynamics and control measures**

The earlier findings highlighted the critical role that consulting employees play when faced with obstacles in influencing the perceived accuracy and unrestricted flow of information and communication. Using this understanding as a foundation, the analysis of data from Tables 5.12, 5.28, and 5.44 uncovers subtle patterns that clarify the complex relationship between perceptions of autonomy and operational impact and communication dynamics within various organisational divisions.

In Pietermaritzburg, an unanimity is evident: 75% of management and 100% of staff respondents agree that communication is accurate, free-flowing and supportive of

creativity and innovation (Table 5.12, 5.28). Additionally, there is complete agreement (100%) on actively seeking feedback to enhance operational procedures and in the autonomy to carry out job duties. Moreover, there is a consensus (100%) on actively seeking feedback to enhance operational procedures and in the autonomy to carry out work duties efficiently (Table 5.44). Together, these results paint a vivid picture of Pietermaritzburg's organisational landscape: a cohesive and communicative setting that encourages information flow, autonomy and active participation in advancing operational improvements.

In contrast to Pinetown, just 19.2% of employees and 18.2% of management believe that communication is accurate and free flowing (Table 5.12). This significant difference in how communication is perceived points to possible problems with information sharing at the Pinetown division. The agreement percentages between 54.6% and 65.4% for encouraging creativity, getting input for operational improvements and having the freedom to work efficiently show that Pinetown staff and management have a less positive view of autonomy and operational impact than Pietermaritzburg staff and management. Added to these findings is that most respondents from all the divisions under study also indicated that the company has too many control measures in place such as rules, regulations and in place (Table 5.13).

Overall, these results highlight the complex interactions among efficient communication, autonomy perceptions, the impact of control measures and its subsequent operational impact. Pietermaritzburg is a prime example of where open communication facilitates the free exchange of ideas and creates an environment that encourages individualism and active involvement in process enhancements. The lower agreement levels in Pinetown, on the other hand, suggest possible areas for development in fostering autonomy, inventiveness and successful operational contributions, suggesting underlying communication issues that may require strategic attention.

Furthermore, in the case of Pietermaritzburg, the study's findings highlight the fact that when a company cultivates a culture of free and open communication and gives people a feeling of agency, it has the innate capacity to move past the limitations imposed by strict rules, regulations and SOP that are directed from a top-down

hierarchical structure. Essentially, the combination of open communication and independence allows a division to function better and move outside of conventional, hierarchical structures, creating a more flexible and dynamic working environment that is more adaptive to emergent change.

The viewpoints that stem from the many theoretical frameworks that were presented in the literature all agree on one main point: the importance of the free flow of communication and autonomy. This repeated emphasis highlights how important autonomy is to fostering an unrestricted exchange of information inside an organisation. Organisations that prioritise autonomy can lay the groundwork for managing emergent change in an effective manner by implementing a bottom-up approach to internal communication and exhibiting adaptability to dynamic shifts (Redding 1972; Dennis 1974; Jantsch 1980; Wheatley 1994; Martins & Von der Ohe 2003; Peppers 2014:para. 2-6; Cameron & Green 2015; Becker 2019). As a result, the results both validate existing research and the conceptual framework, emphasising the critical role that autonomy plays in promoting an unimpeded and unhindered exchange of information in the context of internal organisational communication.

- **Impact of information and communication channel richness in creating a learning organisation**

Data from the findings reveal a pattern and association between a learning organisation and the amount and flow of information during change, otherwise known as ¹⁸*complexity absorption*. The data revealed that divisions that had those organisational capacities that facilitated self-organisation, such as autonomy, free flowing communication and which were process and purpose focused, indicated tendencies towards a learning organisation (results presented in Table 5.27 – 5.29 and 5.32 – 5.33). The question presented in Table 5.24 presents the data related to how managers deal with complexity or emergent changes. Data revealed that Pinetown management respondents indicated the lowest agreement with the question

¹⁸ When an organisation or manager acknowledge information as important in change, but focus is on the flow of information and not necessary what caused the change. THEODORIDIS, C. 2009. Complexity in retail Organisations: an empirically informed discussion with particular reference to retail location strategy. Citeseer.

regarding providing feedback when there is a problem (Table 2.24). Compared to the other divisions under study whose agreement levels were between (85.5%-100%), 63.7% of Pinetown management agreed with this question. This data reveals the impact information has on creating a learning organisation and suggest that when information is free flowing during emergent change through complexity absorption that maintaining emergent change is enhanced.

Furthermore, the findings from the data reveal the association between *complexity reduction*¹⁹ and strange attractors such as an organisations mission and vision. Data revealed that divisions whose managers had higher degrees of complexity reduction also indicated the least level of agreement to whether they thought the organisations mission and vision was very rigid (Table 5.16). Compared to the other divisions under study whose agreement levels were between 85.8%-100%), Pinetown management agreed 63.7% regarding whether they thought the organisations mission and vision was rigid and strict. The data reveals that divisions that rely on the control of information to manage change are less likely to facilitate a learning organisation that is responsive to change. Furthermore, data revealed the limited ability of the mission and vision as suitable strange attractors for dynamic and diverse workforces.

Overall, the data presented above suggests a strong association and evident impact of organisational capacities, such as the organisations missions and vision, level of control and flow of information as well as sociocultural capacities such as cultural competence has on creating a learning organisation that is both cultural inclusive and can respond to a dynamic work environment. Equifinality is a key notion that affects information flow and system adaptability when managing the complexity of open systems like organisations. Introduced in Chapter 1 on Systems (2.2.1), this theory highlights that a system can accomplish its objectives through a variety of pathways or feedback mechanisms. It is especially relevant when considering the interaction between a superior and a subordinate inside an organisation. According to Lee (1998: 182), equifinality makes it possible to regulate change by utilising a variety of

¹⁹ The organisation or managers attempt to reduce the amount of information which in turn limits connections between employees, as well as limits the flow of communication and information. This process is controlled by inflexible structures and processes *ibid*.

strategies and feedback mechanisms from various entropic times. This suggests that complex systems are inherently flexible and emphasises the fact that there is no one right or incorrect way to solve a problem as long as input is provided. In other words, it highlights the importance of open communication.

The richness of communication channels becomes critical in the setting of complexity adaptation and absorption. The richness of these channels, which indicates the volume of information passing through them is a key factor in a complex system's flexibility. This idea is further supported by Goldin-Meadow (2008:184) who highlights the importance of input and by extension the volume and flow of information while also pointing out the resilience of human communication. The energy needed to keep a system from going into chaos is intrinsically linked to information and input, indicating that there are several ways to approach the edge of chaos with input, including the facilitation of strange attractors driven by the communication climate as presented in the conceptual framework, with findings in 5.10.1 aligning with the conceptual framework.

5.8 To explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes (Objective 4)

In presenting the discussion for objective 4, the study will present the discussion framed around the emerging patterns related to this objective. These emerging patterns are aligned to the objective are discussed below:

- **Impact of of Strange Attractors in Facilitating Diversity and Self-organisation**

Strange attractors were emphasized in Section 2.2.2.3 (a.ii) of the literature review as essential components for preserving organisational stability throughout transition. They function as stabilizing elements inside the chaos as the conceptual framework's Figure 3.2 shows. In Section 3.6, managers were conceived of as local custodians who facilitate odd attractors. Section 2.2.2.3 (a.v) highlighted the predefined nature of organisational missions and visions, which are usually developed by senior management and their limitations in terms of reacting to emergent changes on a local level.

The data findings challenge the existing literature that places an organisation missions and visions function as significant strange attractor in maintaining “bounded stability”. The previous Section (5.8) findings revealed the association and interdependence between the perception of shared meaning, a learning organisation and diversity. While the findings from Section 5.7 presented the association between higher levels of interdepartmental communication and coordination, autonomy and the free flow of communication. In conclusion, even when the organisations mission and vision were communicated clearly, they were insufficient to operate as strange attractors for emergent transformation and self-organisation. In contrast, respondents from Pietermaritzburg demonstrated higher levels of autonomy, variety, communication, interdepartmental coordination and local contacts suggesting a stronger capacity for self-organisation.

In fact, Indeed (2021b:para. 5) provides a reason for why in contrast to other study divisions, Pinetown respondents did, on the whole, considerably perceive the organisation's mission and vision as being less rigid: having a rigid goal and vision may be "more comfortable" for employees who operate in silos since they are less adaptable to change. Strange attractors are meant to serve as a border during times of transition and in order to self-organise and be flexible, they must be pushed from the bottom up. According to data from the research, a mission and vision that is adopted as a strange attractor - as it was for the majority of Pinetown respondent - is limited in diversity and its ability to self-organize. Furthermore, unlike the majority of Pietermaritzburg respondents, these strange attractors are limited in diversity because they are not shaped by local interactions from the bottom up.

- **Shared meaning and diversity competencies in creating a learning organisation**

Data from Table 5.51, 5.64 and 5.65 on cultural diversity addresses the perception of cultural diversity as an asset from the perception of management (Table 5.55) and staff (Table 5.51 and 5.54). Management respondents from Pinetown and Truck Centre New Germany had significantly lower agreement to the question when compared to other divisions under study. Furthermore, staff from these divisions equally agreed and perceived management to not appreciate diversity as an asset as well as not able to easily communicate with different cultures. This data firstly reveals

that perceptions of management on the value of diversity as an asset to the success of a department has a direct impact on the perceptions of staff and their awareness that management do not view diversity an asset.

Secondly, data revealed that there seems to be an association between diversity been seen as an asset and the extent of shared meaning that is created. Table 5.24, Table 5.25 and Table 5.40 addresses the degree of perceived shared meaning. Both Pinetown and Truck Centre New Germany respondents indicated significantly less agreement to questions relating to shared meaning when compared to the other divisions under study. For example, Table 5.19 presents the question relating to whether employees are encouraged to reveal any differences of opinion that they have with their bosses. Compared to an agreeableness range of 75%-100% from staff and management respondents from the other divisions under study, only 53.3% of Pinetown staff and 36.4% of Pinetown management agreed.

Thirdly, the data reveals a discrepancy between the view of cultural awareness of management from Pinetown and New Germany Truck Centre and the perception of cultural intelligence by staff. Management respondents from Pinetown and New Germany Truck Centre indicated high levels of cultural awareness (Table 5.58 and Table 5.59) but data from staff respondents from Pinetown and Truck Centre New Germany (Tables 5.60, 5.56 and 5.40) indicated disagreement that both communication was culturally efficient as well as management not facilitating an environment that facilities shared meaning. This furthermore suggests an association between cultural competencies and creating a learning organisation and supports the view of the researcher presented in the conceptual framework that management are facilitators of change and have a central role in creating a learning organisation.

Furthermore, the findings from Table 5.60 regarding the day-to-day communication channels used between staff and management reveals insights between the possible link between diversity practices and channels of communication. Table 5.60 revealed that Truck New Germany was the only division under study who ranked departmental meetings as the most used communication channel for day-to-day communication. As discussed above, Trucks New Germany showed less agreement on shared meaning and diversity thus less “stability” according to ANOVA findings (5.4.4). When compared to departmental meetings, informal communication channels are thought to

be among the most information-rich media according to the media richness theory. Additionally, department meetings are typically less regular, which makes them less flexible in the face of sudden developments. These findings confirm both the literature and suitability of the Chaos Theory as a framework. According to various authors, such as Sehhat *et al.* (2012), Johnson *et al.* (1994), Magalhães (2009:4) and Baker (2007), informal communication methods are regarded more favourably and are more credible, giving managers current, pertinent knowledge that they need to make decisions about emergent change. Furthermore, communication richness facilitates higher engagement to create shared meaning.

A learning organisation and shared meaning are facilitated by management competencies including cultural competence and the ability to allow free-flowing communication as discussed in Section 5.2.2 of the literature. These abilities are therefore crucial for incorporating the varied and constantly evolving South African culture into organisational communication processes, according to the Chaos Theory. According to the data, in order to have diverse workforces that are six times more likely to adapt to change, this iterative and dynamic process of learning that integrates South African culture is rooted in constant learning through interaction from cultures rather than just learning about cultures (Association 2017: 68; Deloitte 2020).

Table 5.7 in the literature presents the interrelatedness of shared meaning against the backdrop of the Chaos Theory. Shared meaning is facilitated by interaction, it is a transaction and is culture specific and equally encompasses the principles of self-organisation, non-linearity and the creation of a learning organisation. Shared meaning is a two-way relationship of influence and therefore suggests that if feedback and interaction from the bottom-up is limited or not free flowing that shared meaning is equally limited and therefore, diversity and inclusion is limited. With the South African cultural landscape being diverse, the findings from the data confirm the position of the Chaos Theory that managing diversity needs to be a process of creating shared meaning that facilitates diversity and inclusion in order to adapt to the everchanging landscape of South African culture.

5.9 Conclusion

This chapter presented the research data as well as interpreted the data and presented the key findings based on the study's objectives. Data from the findings

indicate that sociocultural capacities such as the flow of communication, communication context and the perception of diversity have an impact on the efficiency of internal organisational communication. Furthermore, operational capacities such as organisational structure, management control and control through processes also have an impact on the efficiency of internal communication in its ability to manage emergent change. The chapter also summarised the appropriateness of current models of internal organisational communication as presented in the literature review (Section 4.4). This analysis concluded that the current models of internal organisational communication are limited with regards to their appropriateness from a *glocal* perspective.

The chapter also presented the findings relating to the study's objective to explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal organisational communication process. The results from the findings strongly suggest that the Chaos Theory is an appropriate framework in which to develop a *glocal* process to manage emergent change with internal organisational communication. The data revealed associations between the Chaos Theory principles and their appropriateness in creating a learning organisation and self-organising system that is responsive to change. The next chapter will present a summary of the key findings as well as present the original contribution of the study in line with the fourth objective of the study; namely, determine the efficiency of current internal organisational communication processes within the various hierarchical levels of the selected organisation under study. The chapter will furthermore offer conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 of the study provided an overview of the study, including presenting the background of the study, the aims and objectives and the methodology that would be used in the study. Chapter 2 presented the three literature foundations; namely, the Systems Theory and Systems Thinking considering its importance in understanding change. Furthermore, the chapter introduced one of the key focus areas and the conceptual framework of the study, the Chaos Theory. It introduced the key principles of the Chaos Theory and concluded with presenting the importance of Systems Thinking through a Chaos Theory lens from a sociocultural and operational application. It further presented the literature regarding emergent change, including the history, evolution and the colonial influences from a South African perspective. Moreover, it presented the operational, sociocultural and Chaos Theory application to managing emergent change from a *glocal* perspective. It also presented the history and development of internal organisational communication as well as presented and analysed the various internal organisational communication models from the perspective of an appropriate *glocal* perspective. It introduced the Media Richness Theory and internal communication channel types. Finally, it offered a sociocultural view of managing emergent change from an internal organisational communication perspective.

Chapter 3 presented the conceptual framework of the study and offered Chaos Theory as a framework for using internal organisational communication capacities for managing emergent change. This included offering the operational and *glocal* cultural capacities for managing emergent change. Chapter 4 addressed the research methodology of the study. It also presented the research design, sampling and data collection method, data analysis, pretesting as well as the ethical considerations to name a few. In Chapter 5, section one of the chapter presented the data, while section two interpreted the data and offered the findings. Chapter 6 of the study will present the conclusions and offer recommendations. The chapter will present an overview of the key findings and present the conceptual framework of the study.

6.2 Overview of the Study

The purpose of the study and aim was to explore the role of internal organisational communication during emergent change within a selected automotive industry group in KwaZulu-Natal.

The objectives of the study were:

1. To determine the efficiency of internal organisational communication in managing emerging change.
2. To examine the appropriateness of current models of internal organisational communication from a *glocal* perspective.
- 3 To determine the efficiency of current internal organisational communication processes within the various hierarchical levels of the selected organisation under study.
- 4 To explore the application of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal communication processes.

To address these objectives, comprehensive literature reviews were presented to provide a backdrop of the importance and relationship between Systems Thinking, emergent change and internal organisational communication against the framework of the Chaos Theory. To accomplish the aim, the study applied a quantitative research approach to explore and address the study objectives.

6.3 Summary of the key findings and gaps in literature

This section of the chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the study as well as highlighting the gaps in the literature identified in Chapter 2 and 3. With the findings of the study addressing cross-objectives (as presented in Table 5.68) the key findings are presented within these key themes and findings.

6.3.1 Inadequacy of Current Models of Internal Organisational Communication being *glocally* appropriate

Based on the analysis and subsequent findings of the study on the various internal organisational communication models, the study confirmed that current models are

limited in their appropriateness from a *glocal* perspective and thus presents the existing gaps in the literature. The models that were analysed; namely: Steyn and Puth (2000) Strategic Communication Theory and Corporate Communication Strategy Model; Asif and Sargeants (2000) Internal Communication Model; Welch and Jackson (2007) Internal Corporate Communication Model; Verwey and Du Plooy-Cilliers (2003) Communication Triad at Work; and Van Riel (1995) Integrated Communication Model, had various limitations from a *glocal* perspective.

In summary, these models were generally not process driven and focused on top-down approaches that limited these models' ability to be diverse and inclusive (Table 5.77). These models, furthermore, were either lacking or limited in their inclusion of emergent change and the impact emergent change has on communication efficiency and the importance of process driven and not strategic approaches to managing emerging changes. Lastly, these models focused on managements role in the process of internal organisational communication. Furthermore, the models were strategic, top-down approaches wherein the view of communication was seen in isolation from a management role and therefore, are limited in their appropriateness to managing emergent change from a *glocal* perspective.

6.3.2 The Flow of Information and Communication are a basic human need that transcends race and gender

At a fundamental communication level, against the backdrop of the respondents' demographics, the findings from the study revealed that communication in its basic form transcends gender and racial differences. As presented in graph 5.4 and 5.5, the findings concluded that regardless of race or gender, the perception of the flow of communication and the level of autonomy are a shared expectation. These findings are further confirmed with the ANOVA summaries in Tables 5.63 and 5.66 that control measures and the flow of information is universally understood. The research suggests that people value meaningful discourse opportunities, information sharing and the ability to communicate ideas regardless of their gender or racial backgrounds.

6.3.3 The interdependent impact of the flow of information and communication and autonomy and organisational dynamics

The results emerging from the study also revealed the impact of not involving staff during change or when there is a challenge or problem in the organisation or their department has on the perceived flow of communication and thus the efficiency of communication. Furthermore, the findings revealed that this has an impact on the perception of how accurate the information is as well. Additionally, data revealed that although communication and information is perceived to be clear, believable, honest, open and is encouraged between departments, that it does not necessarily relate to the general perception that there is free flow of accurate communication. With access to information being paramount in managing emergent change, the efficiency of how this information flows are of critical importance. However, the results revealed that the context of communication seems to not be as important as the flow of information. In summary, context is irrelevant if there is no information to process. Furthermore, reemphasizing communication as a fundamental need is presented in Section 6.3.2.

From an operational capacities' perspective, data revealed a strong association between efficient communication and the flow of communication with regards to the level of autonomy by both management and staff within the hierarchical structure. The data revealed that staff that have higher levels of autonomy with regards to involvement in operational decision making and encouragement of innovation and creativity perceived communication to be more free-flowing and accurate. This data confirms the position of the researcher that the free flow of communication and level of autonomy has a direct impact on Stigmergy or the indirect coordination of employees in dynamic organisations. Furthermore, the efficiency of communication was equally impacted by the level of autonomy and the level of interdepartmental coordination. Essentially, these findings support the development of inclusive and equitable places that recognise the universality of these core human needs, especially in its basic form of flow of communication. They stress that the pursuit of autonomy, open communication and the freedom to express one's creativity are universal threads that cut beyond the boundaries of gender and ethnicity and weave through the tapestry of human existence.

6.3.4 The suitability of the Chaos Theory as a framework for integrating South African culture into the internal organisational communication processes

Embedded within the data interpretations and findings (Section 5.5 - 5.10), the Chaos Theory was woven into the framework for managing emergent change through internal organisational communication from a glocal perspective. Notably, the majority of the findings in Section 5.5 – 5.10 aligned with and substantiated the conceptual framework articulated in this study. To encapsulate the core discoveries, a concise summary of key findings is presented below.

6.3.4.1 Impact of Diversity on Maintaining an Organisation at the Edge of Chaos

The findings presented in Section 5.6- 5.10 present the importance of shared meaning in creating a learning organisation and thus facilitating self-organisation. The insights from the descriptive and inferential statistics, with specific reference to the Chaos Theory as a framework revealed the impact diversity has on maintaining an organisation at the edge of chaos and facilitating self-organisation. Descriptive statistics in Section 5.9 found a correlation between diversity perceived as an asset and the extent of shared meaning created. For example, Truck Centre New Germany respondents showed less agreement on shared meaning and diversity questions compared to other divisions.

Furthermore, the ANOVA summary findings in Section 5.4.4 revealed significant findings specific to the impact of central tendency measures under study and overall “stability” or in the terms of the study, the ability of the division to remain at the edge of chaos. Durban and PMB consistently display intermediate mean and variability values across all three components. This suggests a balanced performance that falls somewhere in the middle of the high and low value range. These components include a focus on the free flow of communication, control and the Chaos Theory principles, the latter including shared meaning, learning organisation and diversity factors. It is possible to classify Durban and PMB as divisions with consistent and moderate performance, which may benefit from maintaining operational consistency. Conversely, Trucks New Germany exhibits higher variability and a mean that is consistently lower across all constructs.

Table 5.60 revealed that Truck New Germany ranks departmental meetings as the most used communication channel for day-to-day staff management. This suggests a link between diversity practices and communication channels. Informal communication channels are considered more information-rich and flexible, while departmental meetings are less regular, making them less stable. The Chaos Theory is deemed more suitable as a framework as it provides managers with relevant knowledge for decision-making. With shared meaning being a key driver in self organisation and thus maintaining an organisation at the edge of chaos, one needs to equally highlight the role of culture and diversity within this aspect. As discussed in the conceptual framework, shared meaning and the chaos theory share common elements (Table 3.3), these being: transaction; interaction; culture specific; and context and relationship (Ford, 2022, Stroh, 1998, Wheatley, 1994). Furthermore, as presented in the conceptual framework and suggested in Figures 3.7 and 3.8, self organisation is facilitated by the iterative and interdependent interaction of the flow of information, learning and culture (deJong and deBoer, 2003, Zahn, 1999:8, Borakove, 2018). This places diversity as a driving force that impacts shared meaning, a learning organisation, strange attractors and ultimately the ability for a diverse organisation to self organise and remain at the edge of chaos. This key finding further emphasize the position of the study that within a *glocal* perspective and South Africa's culture that diversity cannot be defined because it is constantly changing. Equally, the study established the significant limitations of current models of internal organisational communication from a *glocal* perspective (Section 5.5).

6.3.4.2 Cultural Resilience: A Chaos Theory Framework that Harnesses Diversity Glocally

The findings from the study have confirmed that appropriateness of the conceptual framework of the Chaos Theory for a diverse workforce in South Africa because of its flexible and process-driven nature. As stated by Lekas et al. (2020:2) "culture is not stagnant but a changing system of beliefs and values shaped by our interactions with one another...". South Africa's cultural environment is defined by "diversity" because its dynamic and ever-changing (News24, 2017, Booysen, 2007). Moreover, the findings (graph 5.4-5.9) demonstrates that the ideas of information flow and control are universally understood and transcend racial and gender boundaries. These essential ideas offer a common basis that promotes efficient communication and

operational cohesion among employees, regardless of ethnic variety. Furthermore, the ANOVA inferential statistics (Table 5.63 - 5.66) indicated that these central tendency measures (flow of information, control and the Chaos Theory) are universally understood across hierarchical levels of senior management right through to staff within different roles, functions, departments and divisions. As suggested in the key findings presented in Sections 6.3.4.1, focus is on the interaction of culture, information (communication) and learning or otherwise known and presented by the literature (2.2.2.3 a – v and 2.15.4) and conceptual framework (3.2.2 - iii) as Stigmergy which is indirect coordination at local level.

6.3.4.3 *Impact of Stigmergy facilitated by a communication climate on creating a diversity represented learning organisation*

Another key finding from the aspect of the appropriateness of the Chaos Theory as a framework for managing emergent change *glocally* is the impact of Stigmergy on creating a learning organisation. The key findings presented above (6.3.2, 6.3.3, 6.3.4.2 and 6.3.4.3), emphasize the iterative dynamic of shared meaning, strange attractors, diversity and a learning organisation towards self-organisation. These findings, furthermore, confirm the appropriateness of the original contribution that will be presented in 6.4 that sees the process of Stigmergy as a critical benefit of self-organizing organisation since Stigmergy only occurs as a result of self-organisation (Martins and Von der Ohe, 2003:42, Ayundhasurya and Kurniawan, 2017:141).

As presented in Figure 2.18, Stigmergy occurs as a result of local level interaction and shapes the communication climate. Freimuth (2006:145) states that “new order does not depend on external intervention but generates from inner guidelines that are called strange attractors”. Therefore, reaffirming the position of the study that the key factors that maintain an organisation at the edge of chaos are driven as a result of local interaction (5.10.1). Change that comes from the bottom up is reflective and grounded in reality and not in managers' perceptions of it. The same is true for internal communication; information and communication that comes from the bottom up is more detailed and accurately represents ‘What Is Happening At Local Level’. This Provides Managers And The Organisation With Sufficient information to control emergent change in real time. Based on the above findings and against the backdrop

of the study objectives, the researcher will present the original contribution of the study.

6.4 Original contribution of the study: effectively managing emergent change with internal organisational communication: A glocal, process-driven model

The findings of the study have confirmed that not only are current models of internal organisational communication inappropriate from a South African diversity perspective but it also further suggests that these models are equally limiting in their inclusion of managing emergent change. The literature established the importance of organisations being responsive to emergent change and both Louw and Jackson (2008:16-17) and Deloitte (2017) agree that although South African models are hybrid, they are still influenced by post-colonial, western and eastern ideas and theories. Furthermore, both the literature and findings from the study confirm the researchers position that a “model approach” is limiting and inflexible to be able to adapt to the dynamic nature of a modern organisation, including a diverse South African workforce. Based on the literature, conceptual framework and subsequent findings of the study, the researcher presents the original contribution; namely: *A Glocal Process-Driven Model For Effectively Managing Emergent Change Through Internal Communication* (Figure 6.1). This original contribution is an adaptation of the proposed conceptual framework presented by the researcher in Chapter 3; namely: *the Chaos Theory framework for managing emergent change with internal communication capacities* (Figure 5.2).

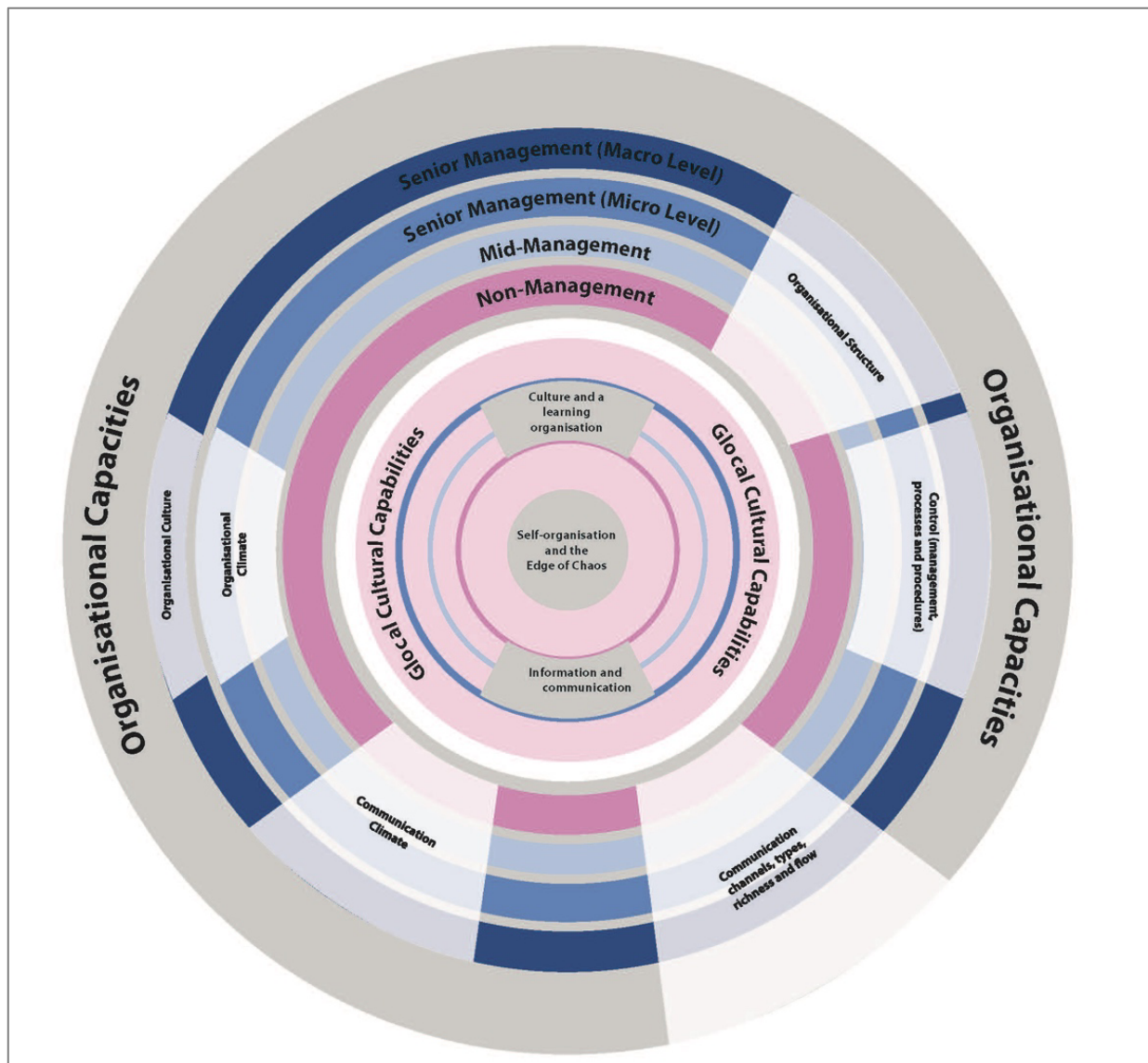


Figure 7.1 – A *Glocal* Process-Driven Model For Effectively Managing Emergent Change with Internal Organisational Communication (du Plessis, 2023)

The proposed original contribution and process-driven model is based on the research findings and is summarized and explained. Figure 7.2 presents this contribution with legends based on the below:

6.4.1 Process-Driven Model Overview

- a. **Circular Process-Driven Model** - the circular model represents a dynamic, interconnected paradigm in contrast to linear models, which depend on sequential, step-by-step procedures. The rigid vertical hierarchy in some traditional models presented in the literature is replaced in this circular

arrangement that creates an ongoing loop which reflects the ongoing changes within the principles of emergent change, the Chaos Theory framework and the dynamic nature of communication.

- b. **Management and non-management circular configuration** – the circular configuration is further broken down into the various management levels. These are indicated in various tones of blue to represent the different levels of management in order of hierarchy; namely: senior management (macro level); senior management (micro level); and mid-management. Non-management are represented in pink. With non-management being at the centre of informing local interaction that informs emergent change, they are closer to the centre of the process-driven model to which is the dynamic state of self-organisation and the edge of chaos.
- c. **Organisational and *Glocal* Capacities** – these capacities, indicated in grey, overlap the relevant management and non-management structures that informs the process. These include the organisational capacities: organisational structure; control (management, processes and procedures); communication channels, types, richness and flow; communication climate; organisational culture; and organisational climate. Furthermore, within the inner circle includes the following *glocal* capacities are indicated within a pink circle: culture and a learning organisation; information and communication; and self-organisation and the edge of chaos. The interconnectedness is figuratively shown by the capacities overlapping the circular structure of management levels, both in the inner and outer circle. This highlights the dynamic and cyclical character of the process. Cross-level decision-making, knowledge sharing and information flow are made possible by these relationships.
- d. **Management Macro and Micro Levels** - informed by the Chaos Theory literature presented in Section 2.2.2.3 – a.iii (non-linearity, scale and holism) on micro and macro patterns and in the previous figure (3.16), proposed clear parameters as to what the macro and micro levels of hierarchy were. However, the findings indicated that due to the nature of most organisations' hierarchical structures a specific structure can be both macro and micro depending on the

context. For example, senior management has two facets: one, there is senior management at head office (head office being the macro environment) level where directors from divisions participate in decision making (directors then forming the micro level). However, these same directors are also senior management to their own staff in their divisions where these directors of the divisions are considering the macro environment to their staff working under them (micro level).

6.4.2 Organisational Capacities

Organisational capacities refer to the abilities, resources and structure of an organisation has been put in place to achieve its mission, vision and objectives and from the position of this study, those capacities that maintain an organisation at the edge of the chaos. Regardless of the type of management structure and based on the literature, structure is still an essential aspect of the Chaos Theory to avoid a system going into complete chaos. The flow of information and communication is directly informed by structure. Figure 3.4 in the conceptual framework presented a simplified figure that indicated the impact organisational structure has on the flow of information and communication. Based on the findings, the original contribution presents a more detailed and evidence-based process-driven model.

The model proposed by the researcher integrates the following organisational capacities: organisational structure; control (management, processes and procedures); communication channels, types, richness and flow; communication climate; organisational climate; and organisational culture. Contingent to their individual attributes, these organisational capacities are categorized within the appropriate tier on the process-driven model. These are briefly discussed below:

- e. **Organisational Structure, Communication channels, types, richness and flow and Communication Climate** – these capacities extend across all tiers or levels on the process-driven model because of their overarching and interdependent impact on each tier.
- f. **Control (management, processes and procedures)** – this capacity extends from senior management (macro level) to mid-management tiers due to this capacity and function being directed by these tiers.

- g. **Organisational climate** – this capacity extends from senior management (micro level) to non-management tiers. Organisational climate is the collective perception of the workplace.
- h. **Organisational culture** – this capacity is limited to the senior management (macro level) tier as organisational culture is predetermined by senior management (Alvarez, 2020:para. 6-8).

These organisational capacities within this process-driven model and informed by the Chaos Theory are both iterative and interrelated. Within the proposed process-driven model, these capacities in turn have a significant impact on the inner tiers of the process-driven model and ability of the organisation to self-organise and remain at the edge of chaos.

6.4.3 Glocal Cultural Capacities

The inner circle of the process-driven model includes the *glocal* cultural capacities that like the organisational capacities in the outer ring informs the ability of an organisation to self-organise and remain at the edge of chaos.

- i. **Culture and a learning organisation and information and communication** form the second circle around self-organisation and the Edge of Chaos. These are the broader elements that are the “energy” that determine the level of self-organisation and the extent to which the organisation remains at the Edge of Chaos. Due to the nature of emergent change and equally the emergent nature of culture from a South African context, there is an innate interdependency between these capacities.
 - *Culture and learning organisation* - culture from a *glocal* capacity and chaos theory framework point of view encompasses the shared values, beliefs, norms and practices informed by the collective (organisational culture and climate) and individual (diversity). Facilitating interactions that shape behaviour between individuals creates shared meaning and thus a learning organisation, which in turn facilitates self-organisation and the edge of chaos.

- *Information and Communication* – indicates the specific elements of information and communication that are informed by organisational capacities including communication channels, types, richness and flow, organisational structure, control, communication climate, organisational climate and organisational culture that are determining factors that inform both communication efficiency and effectiveness.
- j. **Self-organisation and the Edge of Chaos** is placed at the centre of the process to which organisations need to constantly strive towards. With both concepts being dynamic and driven by “energy” in the form of information and communication shaped by culture and a learning organisation as well as meaningful engagement (action) by the organisations members.

The process is entirely presented in a “circle” format to emphasise the researchers finding that the whole process of managing emergent change from a *glocal* perspective and for an organisation to self-organise and remain at the Edge of Chaos is a dynamic process that has no end and no beginning. The process itself, like the concept of the Chaos Theory principles is that it is a non-linear process, both from emergent change and communication. Furthermore, the process is interdependent, meaning a change in one element or capacity causes a change in another.

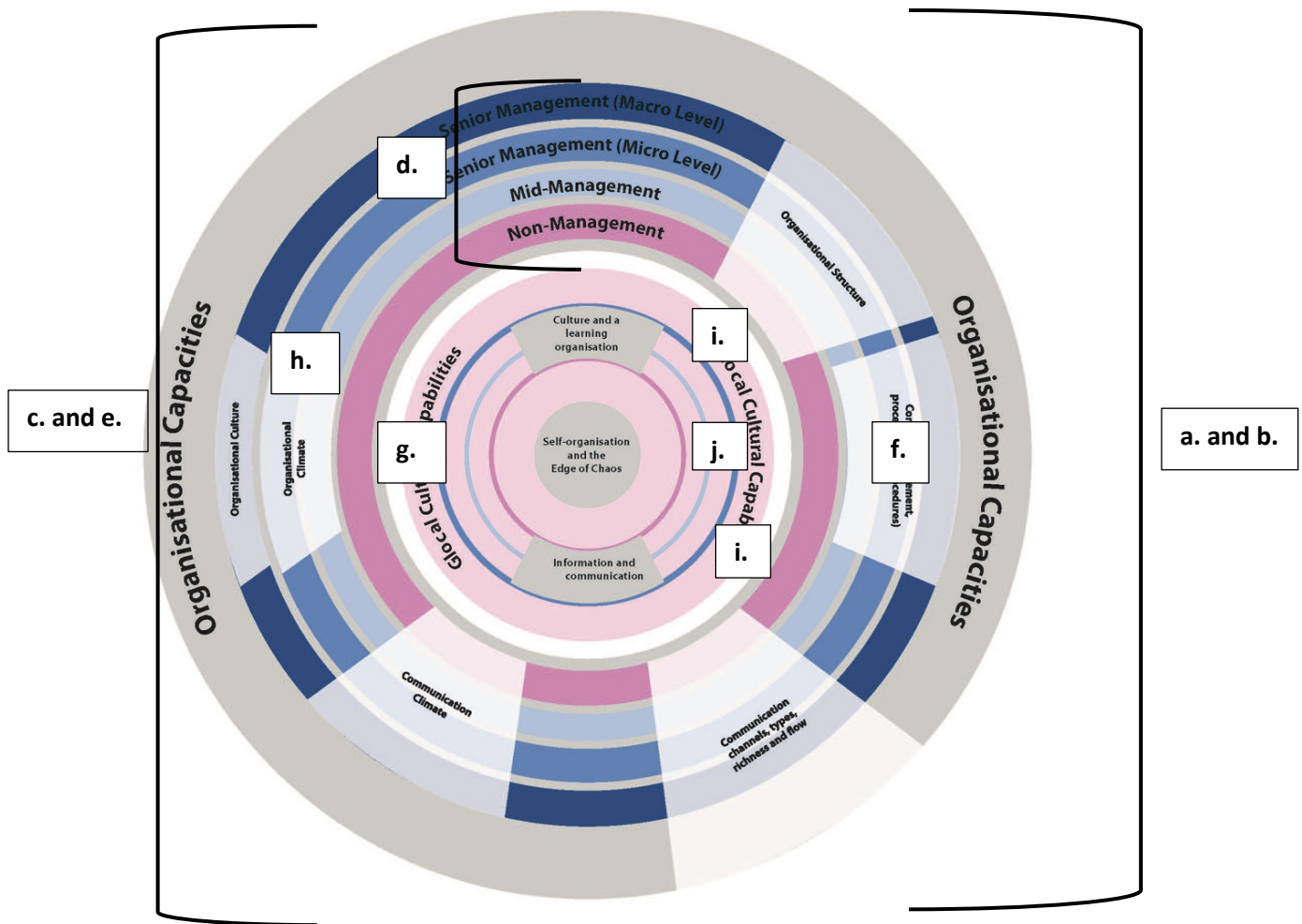


Figure 7.2 – Original Contribution with legends

In summary, the original contribution proposed by this study displays robustness and is strongly supported by the examination of the differences between gender and race and the examination of a range of positions in various organisational departments and divisions. By carefully analyzing the ways in which different demographic and organisational factors influence people's perceptions of autonomy, self-organisation and communication, the study has demonstrated the original contribution adaptability to a broad variety of circumstances.

6.6 Limitations of the study

The study was only conducted at a selected automotive group. Due to time constraints and the in-depth nature of the study, it did not allow for the inclusion of other industries. The study was also limited to an organisation based in KwaZulu-Natal. Furthermore, there was a significant gender disparity amongst participants that were management.

Concerns about the generalizability and trustworthiness of the study's findings, particularly in relation to gender-specific insights are raised by the sample's underrepresentation of females.

With regards to the conceptual framework, potential mediators or moderators that might explain or impact the connections evaluated were not adequately explored. For example, mediators such as employee trust and leadership adaptability, and moderators such as technological adoption rates, organisational size and geographic location were not adequately examined.

6.7 Recommendations for future research

The limitations of the study as described above give rise to future research suggestions. Firstly, the decolonial theory could be used in future studies to investigate the sociocultural and cultural aspects of organisational communication, connecting colonisation, apartheid, diversity, and inclusion issues with a glocal viewpoint that is appropriate for South Africa's particular setting. Secondly, it would be valuable to explore how internal organisational communication and emergent change aligns to long-term organisational strategy, specifically in a longitudinal study. Furthermore, it is suggested that the study be expanded to different sizes of organisations, including SME's as well as multi-national organisations.

Future research will explore how internal communication supports long-term organizational strategy, focusing on its role in adaptability and alignment with evolving strategic goals. This will be investigated further in a longitudinal study, building on the findings of this thesis

6.8 CONCLUSIONS

Communication is essentially the life blood of an organisation and with change being the only constant, communication and emergent change are equally the heartbeat of an organisation. Without properly managing and as the researcher proposes, maintaining an organisation with internal organisation communication and managing emergent change that an organisation would neither operate efficiently nor develop. The aim of the study was to explore the role of internal organisational communication during emergent change from the perspective of determining the efficiency of internal

communication within an organisation's hierarchy, the appropriateness of current models of internal organisational communication and exploring the Chaos Theory as a framework for this process.

The results from the data both confirmed many of the researchers views as presented in the literature as well as the development of the original contributions of the study. Based on the findings and results from the study, this process offers a process to manage emergent change with internal organisational communication that is appropriate for the diverse cultures within South Africa. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the Chaos Theory is an appropriate theory to use as a framework to manage emergent change with internal organisational communication and equally to offer a process-driven model that is inclusive and divers and ultimately appropriate for the South African workforce.

Annexures

Annexure A – Ethical Clearance Letter



MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: FACULTY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (FREC)

27 August 2020

Student Name: Ms Y Du Plessis

Student No: 20426761

Dear Ms Y Du Plessis

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN MANAGEMENT SCIENCES: PUBLIC RELATIONS & COMMUNICATION

TITLE: Intra-Organisation Communication and Change Management: A Glocal Perspective

Please be advised that the FREC Committee has reviewed your proposal and the following decision was made: **Approved – Ethics Level 2**

Date of FRC Approval: 27 August 2020

Approval has been granted for a period of two years from the above FRC date, after which you are required to apply for safety monitoring and annual recertification. Please use the form located at the Faculty. This form must be submitted to the FREC at least 3 months before the ethics approval for the study expires.

Any adverse events [serious or minor] which occur in connection with this study and/or which may alter its ethical consideration must be reported to the FREC according to the FREC SOP's.

Please note that ANY amendments in the approved proposal require the approval of the FREC as outlined in the FREC SOP's.

Yours sincerely

Prof JP Govender

Chairperson: Faculty Research Ethics Committee

Annexure B – Management Questionnaire

Section A - Demographic Information

Race	
African	
Coloured	
Indian	
White	
Other (Specify)	

Age	
18-25 years	
26-35 years	
36-45 years	
46-55 years	
56-65 years	
66+	

Gender	
Male	
Female	
Other	

Language		
	First	Second
Afrikaans		
English		
Ndebele		
SiSwati		
Sotho		
Tsonga		
Tswana		
Venda		
Xhosa		
Zulu		
Other		
N/A		

Highest level of education	
Pre-matric	
Matric	
NQF Level 5-6	
Diploma	
Btech Degree	
Master's degree	
PhD	
Courses (specify)	

Position in the company	
Managing Director	
Director	
Foreman	
Manager	

Branch	
Durban	
Pinetown	
Pietermaritzburg	
Truck Hire	
Other	

Department	
Sales	
Service	
Parts	
F&I	
Admin	
Other	

Which cultural/ethnic group do you belong to?	
Coloured	
Indian	
Ndebele	
SiSwati	
Sotho	
Tsonga	
Tswana	
Venda	
Xhosa	
White	

Zulu	
Other	

SECTION B – Internal Communication Channels

1. **What five (5) communication tool do you use to communicate day-to-day information to your manager?** *Rank in order of frequency with number 1 being the most frequently used and 5 being the least.*

1)	Email	
2)	Phone	
3)	Whats's app Groups	
4)	Departmental Meetings	
5)	Virtual Meetings (MS Teams, Skype etc)	
6)	Face-to-face meetings	
7)	Letters	
8)	Memo	
9)	Notice Board	
10)	Newsletter	
11)	Informal conversations	

2. **What five (5) communication tool does your manager use to communicate day-to-day information to you?** *Rank in order of frequency with number 1 being the most frequently used and 5 being the least.*

1)	Email	
2)	Phone	
3)	Whats's app Groups	
4)	Departmental Meetings	
5)	Virtual Meetings (MS Teams, Skype etc)	
6)	Face-to-face meetings	
7)	Letters	
8)	Memo	
9)	Notice Board	
10)	Newsletter	
11)	Informal conversations	

Section C - Matrix Questions

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Communicating between departments is encouraged.					
2	Employees are encouraged to reveal any differences of opinion which they may have with their bosses.					
3	There is a long, formal process to follow if we want to share a new idea or process that might improve the organisation's success.					
4	My line manager hardly ever communicates the organisation's values and mission to me.					
5	Differences of opinion with line managers is dealt with by ignoring them. There is no open dialogue or open communication.					
6	Communication between the different departments flow freely and accurately.					
7	I filter information before communicating it to my staff and exclude information I do not think is important.					
8	When I am busy and day-to-day problems arise, I often 'flag' them					

	and deal with them later or on another day.					
9	My line manager provides clear communication to me that I understand.					
1	My line manager provides me with enough information to make an informed decision.					
1	When there is a problem or challenge in my department, I do not send any feedback out or have any meetings until I have found a solution.					
1	When there is a problem or challenge in my department, I gather as much information as possible to solve the problem before finding out what caused the problem.					
1	When there is a problem or challenge in my department, I immediately approach staff where I consult with them to collectively come up with a solution.					
1	Authority to make decisions is only in the hands of senior managers.					
1	Authority to make decisions is only in the hands of senior					

	managers and my line manager.					
1	We are encouraged to take initiative and to make appropriate decisions and do not have to refer everything up the reporting line.					
1	We are not encouraged to use individual initiative.					
1	We are encouraged as employees to be creative and innovative.					
1	The culture in our company views failure as an opportunity to learn.					
2	Our company culture emphasises that long term vision is more important than the short-term vision.					
2	My manager focuses more on results and outcomes than processes and learning from these processes.					
2	I play a role in my line managers decision making process.					
2	In our company outcome and achievement are more important than process and purpose.					
2	Our line manager considers outcome and achievement as more					

	important than process and purpose.					
2	I create open dialogue for my staff to share their views with me and each other.					
2	My line manager creates an environment where I feel comfortable to share my views even if they are different to his/hers.					
2	My line manager actively asks for my opinion to improve operations.					
2	Learning from on the job experience is more important than learning through formal training.					
2	Information shared by my line manager is believable, open and honest.					
3	I often feel my line manager is holding back or filtering information from me.					
3	Senior management has little interest in employees' opinions.					
3	The overall atmosphere in our organisation is one of open and free exchange of ideas and opinions.					
3	My opinion is actively sought when policies, procedures and SOP's					

	need to be changed or updated.					
3	As employees we have the freedom and independence to do our jobs effectively.					
3	Our company has too many rules, regulations and standard procedures.					
3	All employees are actively encouraged to participate in contributing to organisational policy matters.					
3	As employees we are governed by many procedures and policies that regulate how we communicate to people at different levels.					
3	My line manager hardly ever communicates to employees the organisation's values and mission to me.					
3	Our department has its own values that are created by the members of this department.					
4	Not following the prescribed chain of command to get a job done is frowned upon.					
4	We have a say in the organisation's work methods. Our opinion is encouraged.					

4	We are constantly made aware of how we are expected to behave at work.					
4	There is a low level of trust and openness with my line manager.					
4	The organisation's mission and vision is very rigid.					
4	Working across departmental boundaries is strongly encouraged.					
4	We are encouraged to work together with other departments to achieve the organisations goals.					
4	My line manager goes out of his/her way to make sure different departments operate in a coordinated way.					
4	We are encouraged to work with other departments to be more efficient.					
4	I am aware that my own culture can affect my thinking when dealing with a diverse workforce.					
5	I can easily communicate with people who come from different cultures than my own.					
5	I believe that cultural diversity in our workforce is an asset in the					

	success of our department.					
5	Cultural diversity adds more value than challenges.					
5	Our company culture negatively impacts and excludes certain employee's personal cultures.					
5	I am aware that my staff's experiences and background impact the communication process.					

Annexure C - Non-management questionnaire

Section A - Demographic Information

Race	
African	
Coloured	
Indian	
White	
Other (Specify)	

Age	
18-25 years	
26-35 years	
36-45 years	
46-55 years	
56-65 years	
66+	

Gender	
Male	
Female	
Other	

Language		
	First	Second
Afrikaans		
English		
Ndebele		
SiSwati		
Sotho		
Tsonga		
Tswana		
Venda		
Xhosa		
Zulu		
Other		
N/A		

Highest level of education	
Pre-matric	
Matric	
NQF Level 5-6	
Diploma	
Btech Degree	
Master's degree	
PhD	
Courses (specify)	

Branch	
Durban	
Pinetown	
Pietermaritzburg	
Truck Hire	
Other	

Department	
Sales	
Service	
Parts	
F&I	
Admin	
Other	

Which cultural/ethnic group do you belong to?	
Coloured	
Indian	
Ndebele	
SiSwati	
Sotho	
Tsonga	
Tswana	
Venda	
Xhosa	
White	
Zulu	
Other	

SECTION B – Internal Communication Channels

- What five (5) communication tool do you use to communicate day-to-day information to your manager?** *Rank in order of frequency with number 1 being the most frequently used and 5 being the least.*

1.	Email	
2.	Phone	
3.	Whats's app Groups	
4.	Departmental Meetings	
5.	Virtual Meetings (MS Teams, Skype etc)	
6.	Face-to-face meetings	
7.	Letters	
8.	Memo	
9.	Notice Board	
10.	Newsletter	
11.	Informal conversations	

2. **What five (5) communication tool does your manager use to communicate day-to-day information to you?** Rank in order of frequency with number 1 being the most frequently used and 5 being the least.

1.	Email	
2.	Phone	
3.	Whats's app Groups	
4.	Departmental Meetings	
5.	Virtual Meetings (MS Teams, Skype etc)	
6.	Face-to-face meetings	
7.	Letters	
8.	Memo	
9.	Notice Board	
10.	Newsletter	
11.	Informal conversations	

Section C - Matrix Questions

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Communicating between departments is not encouraged.					
2	Employees are not encouraged to reveal any differences of opinion which they may have with their bosses.					
3	There is a long, formal process to follow if we want to share a new idea or process that might improve the organisation's success.					
4	My line manager hardly ever communicates the organisation's values and mission to me.					

5	Differences of opinion with line managers is dealt with by ignoring them. There is no open dialogue.					
6	Communication in our organisation flows freely and accurately.					
7	Communication in our department flows freely and accurately.					
8	Communication between the different departments flows freely and accurately.					
9	Communicating between departments is not encouraged.					
1	My line manager provides clear communication to me that I understand.					
1	My line manager provides me with enough information to make an informed decision.					
1	When there is a problem or challenge in our department, my line manager only provides feedback when he/she has found a solution.					
1	When there is a problem or challenge in our department, my line manager approaches us as staff for our opinion so we can collectively solve the problem.					

1	Authority to make decisions is only in the hands of senior managers and my line manager.					
1	We are encouraged to take initiative and to make appropriate decisions and do not have to refer everything up the reporting line.					
1	We are not encouraged to use individual initiative.					
1	We are encouraged as employees to be creative and innovative.					
1	We view failure as an opportunity to learn.					
1	Long-term vision is more important than the short-term vision.					
2	My manager focuses more on results and outcomes than processes.					
2	I play a role in my manager's decision making process.					
2	Our line manager considers outcome and achievement as more important than process and purpose.					
2	My line manager creates an environment where I feel comfortable to share					

	my views even if they are different to his/hers.					
2	My line manager actively asks for my opinion to improve operations.					
2	Information shared by my line manager is believable, open and honest.					
2	I often feel my line manager is holding back or filtering information to me.					
2	Senior management has little interest in employee's opinions.					
2	The overall atmosphere in our organisation is one of open and the free exchange of ideas and opinions.					
2	My opinion is actively sought when policies, procedures and SOP's need to be changed or updated.					
3	As employees we have the freedom and independence to do our jobs effectively.					
3	Our company has too many rules, regulations and standard procedures.					
3	All employees are actively encouraged to participate in contributing					

	to organisational policy matters.					
3	As employees we are governed by many procedures and policies that regulate how we communicate to people at different levels.					
3	We are asked for our opinion with regards to what the organisation plans to do.					
3	My line manager hardly ever communicates the organisation's values and mission to me.					
3	Our department has its own values that are created by the members of this department.					
3	Not following the prescribed chain of command to get a job done is frowned upon.					
3	We have a say in the organisation's work methods. Our opinion is encouraged.					
3	We are constantly made aware of how we are expected to behave at work.					
4	There is a low level of trust and openness with my line manager.					

4	The organisations mission and vision are very rigid.					
4	Working across departmental boundaries is strongly encouraged.					
4	We are encouraged to work together with other departments to achieve the organisations goals.					
4	My line manager goes out of his/her way to make sure different departments operate in a coordinated way.					
4	We are encouraged to work with other departments to be more efficient.					
4	My line manager appreciates that diversity in our workforce is an asset in the success of our department.					
4	Our company culture negatively impacts and excludes certain employee's personal cultures.					
4	My line manager's own culture affects the way he/she deals with cultures that are different to his/hers.					
4	My line manager can easily communicate with people that are from different cultures to his/hers.					

4	My line manager is aware that my experiences and background impact the way we communicate to each other.					

Annexure D – Matrix question according to Central Tendency Measures

	Central Tendency Measure - Flow of Information
Q. No	Question
8	Communication between the different departments flows freely and accurately.
26	I often feel my line manager is holding back or filtering information to me.

	Central Tendency Measure - Flow of Information
Q. No	Question
4	My line manager hardly ever communicates the organisation's values and mission to me.
14	Authority to make decisions is only in the hands of senior managers and my line manager.
15	We are encouraged to take initiative and to make appropriate decisions and do not have to refer everything up the reporting line.
29	My opinion is actively sought when policies, procedures and SOP's need to be changed or updated.
30	As employees we have the freedom and independence to do our jobs effectively.
31	Our company has too many rules, regulations and standard procedures.
32	All employees are actively encouraged to participate in contributing to organisational policy matters.

37	Not following the prescribed chain of command to get a job done is frowned upon.
41	The organisations mission and vision are very rigid.

	Central Tendency Measure – The Chaos Theory Framework
Q. No	Question
1	Communicating between departments is not encouraged.
2	Employees are not encouraged to reveal any differences of opinion which they may have with their bosses.
3	There is a long, formal process to follow if we want to share a new idea or process that might improve the organisation's success.
4	Differences of opinion with line managers is dealt with by ignoring them. There is no open dialogue.
5	Communication in our organisation flows freely and accurately.
6	Communication in our department flows freely and accurately.
7	Communicating between departments is not encouraged.
8	My line manager provides clear communication to me that I understand.
9	My line manager provides me with enough information to make an informed decision.
10	When there is a problem or challenge in our department, my line manager only provides feedback when he/she has found a solution.
11	When there is a problem or challenge in our department, my line manager approaches us as staff for our opinion so we can collectively solve the problem.
12	We are not encouraged to use individual initiative.
13	We are encouraged as employees to be creative and innovative.

14	We view failure as an opportunity to learn.
15	Long-term vision is more important than the short-term vision.
16	My manager focuses more on results and outcomes than processes.
17	I play a role in my manager's decision making process.
18	Our line manager considers outcome and achievement as more important than process and purpose.
19	My line manager creates an environment where I feel comfortable to share my views even if they are different to his/hers.
20	My line manager actively asks for my opinion to improve operations.
21	Information shared by my line manager is believable, open and honest.
22	Senior management has little interest in employee's opinions.
23	The overall atmosphere in our organisation is one of open and free exchange of ideas and opinions.
24	All employees are actively encouraged to participate in contributing to organisational policy matters.
25	As employees we are governed by many procedures and policies that regulate how we communicate to people at different levels.
26	We are asked for our opinion with regards to what the organisation plans to do.
27	Our department has its own values that are created by the members of this department.
28	We have a say in the organisation's work methods. Our opinion is encouraged.
29	We are constantly made aware of how we are expected to behave at work.
30	There is a low level of trust and openness with my line manager.
31	Working across departmental boundaries is strongly encouraged.

32	We are encouraged to work together with other departments to achieve the organisations goals.
33	My line manager goes out of his/her way to make sure different departments operate in a coordinated way.
34	We are encouraged to work with other departments to be more efficient.
35	My line manager appreciates that diversity in our workforce is an asset in the success of our department.
36	Our company culture negatively impacts and excludes certain employee's personal cultures.
37	My line manager's own culture affects the way he/she deals with cultures that are different to his/hers.
38	My line manager can easily communicate with people that are from different cultures to his/hers.
39	My line manager is aware that my experiences and background impact the way we communicate to each other.

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